

Islamic Terrorism in Southeast Asia: An Effects-Based U.S. Regional Strategy against Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf

**A Monograph
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AY 04-05

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 074-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)		2. REPORT DATE	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED MONOGRAPH	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Islamic Terrorism in Southeast Asia: An Effects-Based U.S. Regional Strategy against Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf			5. FUNDING NUMBERS	
6. AUTHOR(S) MAJOR Michael E. Carter				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) School of Advanced Military Studies 250 Gibbon Ave Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027			10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited				12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE A
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 Words) Islamic Terrorism in Southeast Asia constitutes the second front in the Global War on Terrorism. Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf, transnational terrorist organizations with ties to Al Qaeda, have frustrated U.S. efforts to eradicate terrorism and provide regional stability. Thus far, they have successfully adapted to concerted, international efforts to reduce their sphere of influence. This monograph examined these terrorist groups through the lens of Dr. Bard O'Neill's insurgency framework, with the aim of providing an effects-based counterterrorism strategy. The findings highlight an ineffective, regional strategy, with deficiencies in regional diplomacy, economic reform, financial and judicial practices and military organization. The findings recommend prioritized improvements in these areas, along with more efficient maritime control and customs procedures. The study also indicates the lack of an effective regional information campaign against terrorism. The compilation of these recommendations form an effects-based counterterrorism strategy needed to win in the Global War on Terrorism.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS Joint and Service Pre-positioning Programs GWOT, Islamic, Jemaah Islamiyah, Abu Sayyaf				15. NUMBER OF PAGES 61
				16. PRICE CODE
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT U	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE U	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT U	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT none	

SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES

MONOGRAPH APPROVAL

Major Michael E. Carter

Title of Monograph: Islamic Terrorism in Southeast Asia: An Effects-Based U.S. Regional Strategy against Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf

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ABSTRACT

ISLAMIC TERRORISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: AN EFFECTS-BASED U.S. REGIONAL STRATEGY AGAINST JEMAAH ISLAMIAH AND ABU SAYYAF, by Major Michael E. Carter, USAF, 60 pages.

Islamic Terrorism in Southeast Asia constitutes the second front in the Global War on Terrorism. Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf, transnational terrorist organizations with ties to Al Qaeda, have frustrated U.S. efforts to eradicate terrorism and provide regional stability. Thus far, they have successfully adapted to concerted, international efforts to reduce their sphere of influence. This monograph examined these terrorist groups through the lens of Dr. Bard O'Neill's insurgency framework, with the aim of providing an effects-based counterterrorism strategy. The findings highlight an ineffective, regional strategy, with deficiencies in regional diplomacy, economic reform, financial and judicial practices and military organization. The findings recommend prioritized improvements in these areas, along with more efficient maritime control and customs procedures. The study also indicates the lack of an effective regional information campaign against terrorism. The compilation of these recommendations form an effects-based counterterrorism strategy needed to win in the Global War on Terrorism.

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INTRODUCTION

President George Bush quickly responded to Al-Qaeda's 11 September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Employing a full complement of diplomatic, economic, military and informational efforts, the Bush Administration declared a Global War on Terrorism that continues today. Within two weeks of the attacks, President Bush signed Executive Order 13224, authorizing the United States government "to designate and block the assets of foreign individuals and entities that commit, or pose a significant risk of committing, acts of terrorism."¹ On 7 October 2001, President Bush announced military air strikes against Al-Qaeda terrorist camps and military installations located in Afghanistan. The subsequent military Operation ENDURING FREEDOM expelled the Taliban regime from power and led to the capture or death of numerous Al-Qaeda core operatives. Diplomatically, the Bush administration coordinated efforts with Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf to expose and eliminate Al-Qaeda operatives. Acknowledging a dismal intelligence performance in preventing the September 2001 catastrophe, President Bush created the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission). Led by Republican Thomas Kean, the 9/11 Commission investigated intelligence shortfalls and recommended actions to increase America's ability to defend its homeland from further terrorist attacks.

In July 2004, the President reiterated his commitment to countering global terrorism by outlining his strategy for peace, "First we are defending the peace by taking the fight to the enemy; second, we're protecting the peace by working with friends and allies and international institutions to isolate and confront terrorist and outlaw regimes and third, by "extending the peace by supporting the rise of democracy, and the hope and progress that democracy brings, as the

¹ U.S. State Department, available from <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/fs/2002/16181.htm>.

alternative to hatred and terror in the broader Middle East.²” The President’s strategy for peace has resulted in impressive gains against global terrorism. Yet the accomplishments to date in the Middle East merely address a portion of the global terrorism threat. Far from the cities of Karbarla and Kabul, distanced from the explosive insurgencies engulfing Najaf and Fallujah, Islamic terrorist organizations operating in Southeast Asia have joined the global jihad against the West. The existence of these organizations and their confirmed role in recent local and international terrorist attacks has opened up a second front in the war on terrorism. To date, these resourceful and adaptive Islamic terrorist organizations have rendered U.S. regional counterterrorism strategy ineffective. And while an understanding of their adaptive nature is no predictor of future behavior, it nonetheless is essential in developing a cohesive, counterterrorism regional strategy.

Southeast Asia is home to an expansive network of violent non-state actors. Operating from Mindanao and neighboring islands in the Southern Philippines, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has battled the Philippine government for a separate homeland since the 1970s. Soldiers of Laskar Jihad lend continued support to Muslims fighting Christian rivals on the Indonesian islands of Moluccas and Sulawesi. In Malaysia, Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysian (KMM) insurgents aim to transform Malaysia into an Islamic state. In Thailand, the New Pattani United Liberation Organization is working to establish independence for Muslims in the country’s southern states. Further north in Laos and Vietnam, “freedom fighters drawn from among the countries’ disenfranchised ethnic nationalities continue to protest, sometimes violently, against their governments.”³ Cambodia authorities arrested four members of Jemaah Islamiyah suspected of planning terrorist attacks within the country’s borders. While this

² President George Bush, “Progress in the War on Terror” (speech at Oak Ridge National Laboratory) in Oak Ridge, Tennessee on 12 July 2004. Available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/07/print/20040712-5.html>.

³ Bristow, Damon. “The War on Terrorism and Its Impact on the Security Situation in the Asia Pacific,” Asian Defence Journal (January/February 2002): 6.

monograph focuses solely on Islamic regional terrorism, Southeast Asia is not without other ideological insurgencies, the most threatening being Communism. In 2004, the United States Department of State included The Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army on their Foreign Terrorist Organization list. The growing number of regional insurgents and their ideological variations create a complex environment. The regional instability created by these and other non-state groups, combined with an ever-expanding international reach, threatens the success of America's war on global terrorism.

Adding to this complexity, Southeast Asia presents unique challenges for those prosecuting the war on terror. A region comprised of eleven countries (Burma, Brunei, Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam), and over 17,000 islands, Southeast Asia's efforts to curb terrorism have been encumbered by the existence of porous maritime borders. The relative short distances separating these nations, making transnational terrorism a reality, exacerbate difficulties maintaining border security. Certainly more damaging has been a documented regional history of corrupt government administrations and military organizations, making it difficult for America to engage in militarily-to-military assistance without appearing to condone past human rights abuses. A potential obstruction to fighting terrorism in Southeast Asia in 2004 is presidential and parliamentary elections, which threaten a sustained regional commitment fighting terrorism. Finally, Southeast Asia is home to an extremely large portion of the world's Muslim population, including Indonesia, the most populous Muslim country in the world. Anti-American sentiments arising from the ongoing war in Iraq threaten America's ability to affect change in the region and garner support for global counterterrorism.

The impact of transnational terrorism in Southeast Asia is potentially quite devastating. The United States can ill afford to allow Southeast Asia's moderate Islamic community to fall prey to a miniscule, but growing Islamic fundamentalist movement. The Philippines, a major U.S. ally in the region, welcomes U.S. assistance combating national Moro insurgencies endemic to its

southern islands. Indonesia and Malaysia, though staunchly opposed to an increased U.S. regional presence, benefit in their struggle against terrorism by cooperating with U.S. intelligence agencies. Economically, transnational terrorism threatens not only regional markets, but also the global economy. Thirty percent of the world's trade goods pass through the Malacca Straits on at least 50,000 ships per year—more than double the volume transitioning the Suez Canal and three times that sailing through Panama. Additionally, Japan receives eighty percent of its oil needs through the Malacca Straits. Without the use of this waterway flowing between Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, these tankers would travel an additional thousand miles from the Gulf to reach their destinations.⁴

The Bush administration is certainly aware of the growing terrorist threat residing in the vast Southeast Asia archipelago. In February 2004, Secretary of State Colin Powell released the latest listing of Foreign Terrorist Organizations, which included three Southeast Asian terrorist organizations including Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), and the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army. Operating from within Manila, The New People's Army (the guerrilla arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines) seeks the violent overthrow of the Philippine government. Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf ambitions extend beyond the borders of Indonesia and the Philippines. These transnational insurgents seek to impose their ideologies on a much wider audience, and their terrorist acts have consistently infringed upon other Southeast Asian nations. JI and ASG are both Islamic fundamentalist organizations with established ties with Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda. As such, JI and ASG members have been implicated in several major Al-Qaeda plots, to include the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and September 2001 attacks on the United States. Singapore's Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, commenting on Al-Qaeda's influence in the region, stated, "Osama bin Laden has successfully

⁴ Ramachandran, Sudha. "Divisions over Terror Threat in Malacca Straits", [Asia Times Online](#), 2004.; Kuppuswamy, C.S. "Straits of Malacca: Security Implications", South Asia Analysis Group, Paper No. 1033, 18 June 2004.

twined together a broad range of local groups, each with its own history of struggle for its own objectives, into a common universal jihad against the enemies of Islam.” Of the region’s terrorist organizations, including Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf, Yew notes, “Al-Qaeda has co-opted them into a larger common jihad.”⁵ These organizations present an ever-expanding threat to the United States and its allies.

The United States faces a daunting task in Southeast Asia. Developing an effective counterterrorism strategy to deal with the plethora of unique, yet intertwined terrorist organizations requires capabilities beyond pure military might. Admiral Fargo, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, during testimony to the House Armed Services Committee in March 2004 stated, “Clearly, we don’t see military action as the sole or even primary instrument of national power in this fight – intelligence sharing and law enforcement lead much of this effort.”⁶ Integrated interaction between U.S. Department of State agencies, but more importantly, cooperation among Southeast Asian states is a must. Military action in the region must follow the lead of clearly defined political objectives, a challenging feat in light of ongoing U.S. Presidential elections.

The adaptive nature of terrorism makes developing a counter strategy extremely difficult. CNN journalist Maria Ressa clearly articulates this difficulty in her latest book. In *Seeds of Terror*, Ressa compares fighting terrorism to the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle. This principle of quantum physics states, “you cannot find the location of an electron at this precise moment because the very act of trying to locate it pushes it somewhere else.”⁷ Ressa concludes, “That’s exactly what it’s like to try to predict Al-Qaeda’s next moves. Every arrest, every new piece of

⁵ Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, address at the 1st International Institute for Strategic Studies Asia Security Conference; 31 May 2002.

⁶ United States Department of State. “Patterns of Global Terrorism: 2003”. Available from <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/2003/31611pf.html>

⁷ Ressa, Maria A. *Seeds of Terror: An eyewitness Account of Al-Qaeda’s Newest Center of Operations in Southeast Asia*. New York: Free Press, 2003: 203.

information that's released into the public domain...changes the way the group operates.”⁸ The analogy applies equally to terrorist organizations in Southeast Asia. Speaking of the region's insurgents, the Australian Government wrote, “They have demonstrated a capacity to identify and exploit weaknesses in security arrangements and they continually seek new methods to defeat countermeasures. The adaptive nature of these terrorists means that their past actions will not always be a useful indicator of their future plans.”⁹ It is impossible to predict the exact nature of these adaptive groups, yet through a detailed study of adaptive trends and tendencies, one can better prepare an adequate strategy for defeating them. Dr. Bard E. O'Neill, Professor of National Security Strategy and Director of Studies of Political Violence and Terrorism at the National War College has offered one such methodology.

In his book entitled *Insurgency and Terrorism*, Dr. O'Neill introduces a method of systematically analyzing insurgent organizations. Dr. O'Neill's comprehensive framework aligns insurgencies with one of three general forms of warfare: terrorism, guerrilla war or conventional war. Subsequent analysis seeks to identify an insurgency's intended political targets, its aims and goals, and the strategic approach adapted to accomplishing these goals. O'Neill uses five criteria to evaluate an insurgency's progress: Environment, Popular Support, External Support, Organization and Unity and Government Response. Environmental factors include both physical and social aspects of Indonesia. These criteria will be used to analyze Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf's inherent strengths and weaknesses in order to identify those critical vulnerabilities that can be exploited by United States regional strategy.

This monograph will utilize Dr. O'Neill's framework to define counterterrorism effects essential to developing a counterterrorism strategy for Southeast Asia's Islamic transnational terrorist insurgencies, Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf. Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf are

⁸ Ibid, 203.

⁹ Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade White Paper. *Transnational Terrorism: The Threat to Australia*. 2004:18

two distinct terrorist organizations, yet they share many connections. In addition to being Islamic groups, their operations and influences interact in dynamic fashion. It is impossible to fully consider Islamic terrorism in Southeast Asia without a clear understanding of the present nature of these organizations. Admittedly, this monograph does not discuss other ideologically based insurgencies, such as the Communist New People's Party. The vast distinctions between ideologies necessitate individual research efforts. While Islamic terrorism is but a part of the insurgency threat in Southeast Asia, its understanding is a critical component to an effective U.S. strategy for the region.

Thus far, I have used the terms insurgency and terrorism interchangeably. In *Insurgency and Terrorism*, Dr. O'Neill defines an insurgency as "a struggle between a non-ruling group and the ruling authorities in which the non-ruling group consciously uses political resources and violence to destroy, reformulate, or sustain the basis of legitimacy of one or more aspects of government."¹⁰ U.S. Joint Publication 1-02 provides a similar, though leaner definition of an insurgency as "an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through use of subversion and armed conflict."¹¹ Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf fit the description of an insurgency based upon these definitions. The link between insurgency and terrorism, according to Dr. O'Neill, lies in the form of warfare insurgents use to accomplish their goals.

When insurgent organizations use terrorism, they exact violence "directed primarily against noncombatants (usually unarmed civilians), rather than operational military and police forces or economic assets (public or private)."¹² In the long term, terrorism serves to alter aspects of politics O'Neill refers to as political community, political system, ruling authorities or the

¹⁰ O'Neill, Bard E., *Insurgency and Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare*. Dulles, Virginia: Brassey's Inc., 1990: 13

¹¹ Joint Publication 1-02, "DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms", 7 October 2004:260.

¹² O'Neill, 24.

policies these authorities decree. An intermediate objective of terrorism is to erode government support while short-term objectives include

Exacting particular concessions (e.g, payment of ransom or the release of prisoners), gaining publicity, demoralizing the population through the creation of widespread disorder, provoking repression by the government, enforcing obedience and cooperation from those inside and outside the movement, fulfilling the need to avenge losses inflicted upon the movement, and enhancing the political stature of specific factions within an insurgent movement.¹³

Islamic terrorist organizations in Southeast Asia share many of these objectives and espouse many more. Joint Publication 3-07.2 defines terrorism as “the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to include fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.”¹⁴ A dominant feature of both definitions involves changing the existent political governance through violence. Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf both seek to change, through violence, the political apparatuses of most regional countries. Through increased operational reach, these once localized insurgencies have become transnational terrorist.

The purpose of this monograph is to identify a U.S. regional counterterrorism strategy to use in the Global War on Terrorism against Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf. Throughout the paper, both historical and current empirical data on these two insurgent groups is infused into Dr. Bard O’Neill’s conceptual insurgency framework. Widely respected as an authority on insurgencies, Dr. O’Neill’s framework provides a manner in which to dissect and analyze insurgents in an effort to increase understanding and develop effective countermeasures. This monograph aims to use this framework to highlight a variety of adaptations that have allowed Southeast Asia’s Islamic terrorist organizations to operate successfully in the face of America’s resolve to eliminate them. These adaptations have kept these groups not only relevant, but also effective. An examination of these adaptations identifies key effects the United States must create through the use of its instruments of national power.

¹³ O’Neill, 25.

¹⁴ Joint Pub 3-07.2, “Joint Tactics, Technique and Procedures for Antiterrorism”, 17 March 1998:

Jemaah Islamiyah—“Islamic Community”

On 12 October 2002, three near simultaneous explosions ripped through Kuta, Bali, a crowded tourist town located in Indonesia. Paddy’s Irish Pub and the Sari Club were partially destroyed while the U.S. Consulate sustained minor damage. Over two hundred people, mostly foreign tourist, lost their lives during the attacks. The Bali bombing forced Indonesia’s government into action. After denying the existence of terrorists operating within Indonesian’s borders, President Megawati Sukarnoputri could no longer dismiss the existence of local insurgents working in conjunction with Al Qaeda. U.S. efforts to entice Megawati to openly confront transnational terrorism increased in intensity. Within two weeks of the attack, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell publicly announced the addition of Jemaah Islamiyah to the administration’s Foreign Terrorist Organizations list, the designation of JI under Executive Order 13224, and requested the United Nations subject the organization to financial restrictions of UN Security Council Resolutions 1267 and 1390. With these actions, the United States welcomed Jemaah Islamiyah into the global war on terrorism.

Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) is one of the longest standing Islamic insurgencies in Southeast Asia. Originating in Indonesia in the early 1970s, JI has steadily expanded its operational reach throughout Southeast Asia, establishing cells in Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines and Thailand. The impetus for JI comes from the Darul Islam rebellions of Indonesia, which began in the late 1940s. Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosuwirjo led Darul Islam, an Islamic movement in opposition to imperial Dutch rule, from West Java. Following national independence, Darul Islam members waged a fierce armed insurgency in West Java against President Sukarno’s secular government from 1948-1962. In the mid 1960s, Sukarno subdued the rebellion and remaining members fortunate to avoid death or imprisonment went underground.

President Sukarno’s regime began disintegrating in the early 1960s and in 1965, he was deposed by Major General Suharto. Under President Suharto, Indonesia’s Muslim population suffered greatly. His restrictive political system, which recognized only three political parties,

was aimed at “eliminating opposition before it even became public.”¹⁵ Using a cleverly disguised political ruse, Suharto encouraged a split of the Muslim United Development Party (PPD), the only recognized Muslim political voice, into two distinct factions, PPD and Komando Jihad. During the 1977 presidential elections, President Suharto sprung his trap by arresting 185 Komando Jihad members, accusing them of attempting to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia.¹⁶ Arrests continued the following year, including the detention of Abu Bakar Ba’asyir and his associated Abdullah Sungkar, passionate followers of Darul Islam. Ba’asyir and Sungkar were also the founders of Al Mukmin, “a boarding school in Solo, on the main island of Java, that preached the puritanical Wahhabi interpretation of Islam founded and propagated in Saudi Arabia.”¹⁷ Ba’asyir and Sungkar would become the founders of the modern Jemaah Islamiyah.

The development of Jemaah Islamiyah accelerated in 1982, following Ba’asyir and Sungkar’s early release from prison and their return home to Pondok Ngruki. From 1982 to 1984, Ba’asyir and Sungkar taught at Al Mukmin. The school would eventually become a center for Muslim radical activity, a place of study for many of Jemaah Islamiyah’s leaders to include Bali bombers Amrozi and Mukhlas. The terrorist who would later drive the bomb in front of the JW Marriott Hotel in Jakarta was also a former Ngruki student.¹⁸ In 1985, fearing a second imprisonment, Ba’asyir and Sungkar fled to Malaysia, taking their fledgling organization with them. In Malaysia, JI aligned itself with other dissident Muslims and “rubbed elbows with other Muslim militants with their own causes and broadened the scope of their jihad, giving them common cause with Muslims in Egypt, Chechnya and the Philippines.”¹⁹ With the fall of President Suharto in 1998, Ba’asyir and Sungkar returned to Indonesia. In less than a year,

¹⁵ Ressa, 47.

¹⁶ Ibid. 48

¹⁷ Manyin, Mark. “Terrorism in Southeast Asia”, Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress, 13 August 2004: CRS-5.

¹⁸ Australian Government White Paper, 43

¹⁹ Ressa, 50.

Jemaah Islamiyah I would conduct its first terrorist attack aimed at an unsuspecting Indonesian government.

Abu Sayyaf—“The Bearer of the Sword”

On the morning of 27 May 2001, eighteen tourists were kidnapped from Dos Palmas Resort on the Philippine island of Palawan. Escorted aboard a high-speed motorboat at gunpoint, they were greeted with the following words: “We’re the Abu Sayyaf, Some people call us terrorists. We want you to know, we’re not terrorists. We are simply people whom the Philippine government has robbed of our homeland, and we just want it back. No one in the government will listen to us, and so we have to do things like this to gain notice.”²⁰ These words amounted to more than the incoherent ramblings of a band of criminal renegades or local thugs. History provides meaning and context to Abu Sayyaf’s plight.

Islam arrived in the Philippines in 1380 by Arab missionaries. By the time Spanish explorers reached the area in 1578, the Moro (Muslim) people were well into the reign of their sixth Sultanate. Initial efforts at pacifying Moro populations achieved limited success. “Spain’s original foothold in the Philippines came through conversion of pagan tribes and not after contact with the Mohammedans. The conversion of the north was a simple matter, and it was accomplished with very little bloodshed.”²¹ In the south, however, progress halted in the face of Islamic Moros determined to maintain control of their lands. For the next three hundred and twenty years, Spaniards fought to extend their dominance throughout Philippines southern islands. Yet by 10 December 1898, when Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States,

²⁰ Burnahm, Gracia, *In the Presence of My Enemies*, Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2003: 10.

²¹ Hurley, Vic. *Swish of the Kris: The Story of the Moros*. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc. 1936: 42-43.

“Spanish control over the Moros was never completed, and the Muslim struggle carried over into the United States colonial era.”²²

From 1899-1914, U.S. efforts to suppress Muslim insurrections achieved limited success and resulted in extremely high civilian casualties and continued resistance. Following Philippine independence in 1946, government reforms encouraged Catholic Filipinos to migrate from crowded, northern cities to the wide expanses of Muslim dominated Mindanao. “These programs altered the ethnic and religious balance in Mindanao—from an overall Muslim majority in Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago at the end of the nineteenth century to less than 17 percent of the population today—and precipitated bitter conflicts over land distribution and ownership.”²³ The migrations evoked strong reactions from Mindanao’s Moro population and eventually lead to violent clashes between the two religious groups. Government intervention only increased existing tensions as Muslims accused Philippine army troops, sent to restore peace and order, as siding with the Christians. Religious turmoil continued into the 1970s, when organized Muslim insurgencies arose. In 1972, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), led by Nur Misuari and Salamat Hashim, consolidated a majority of partisan Moro forces into a loose political framework aimed at obtaining an independent Moro nation. For several years, Misuari and Hashim matured their organization with assistance from Islamic leaders throughout the world, most notably Libya and Egypt. Ideological differences between MNLF’s leaders soon resulted in Hashim’s ouster and the emergence in 1984 of a new, more religiously driven insurgent group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). While the secularly educated and strongly nationalistic Misuari steered the MNLF toward talks of peace and concessions of autonomy with the Philippine government, Hashim’s MILF continued to fight for independence. According to Hashim, the political objective of the MILF was “the creation of a separate Islamic state in all areas where Muslims are a

²² Dolan, Ronald E. *Philippines: A Country Study*. Washington D.C.: Library of Congress 1993: 290.

²³ Rabasa, Angel and Peter Clark. *Indonesia’s Transformation and the Stability of Southeast Asia*. 86

majority in the southern Philippines.” Hashim’s political entity, referred to as the Mindanao Islamic Republic (MIR), sought to “establish a system of government that upholds and applies sharia law in all aspects of daily life.”²⁴

While Misuari and Hashim struggled to lead the Moro Islamic struggle on Mindanao, a third insurgent organization, Abu Sayyaf, arose from amid their shadows. Abu Sayyaf’s founder Abdurajak Abu Bakr Janjalani, a native of Basilan Island of the southern Philippines, began his adult life employed as a fisherman. In the early 1980s, Janjalani received financial support from Al Islamic Tabligh (a Muslim fundamentalist movement) to study in the Middle East. For the next several years, Abdurajak Janjalani studied theology and Arabic in Libya, Syria and Saudi Arabia. A veteran of the Afghanistan-Soviet war, he fought under the leadership of legendary Pushtun warlord Abdul Rasul Abu Sayyaf and personally met Osama bin Laden. Janjalani returned to Basilan Island in the summer of 1991 and organized Abu Sayyaf, named in honor of Abdul Rasul. Ramzi Yousef (convicted of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing) provided Janjalani’s initial recruits basic military and explosives training. Financially, Mohammed Jamal Khalifa, a Saudi and brother-in-law of bin Laden, provided Janjalani start up funds. From the group’s inception, Janjalani preached a radical Islamic message similar to that of bin Laden. He enticed younger Filipinos to help him establish an Islamic state in Mindanao “where Muslims can follow Islam in its purest and strictest form as the only path to Allah.”²⁵

Insurgency Type and Aim

Categorizing insurgents into well-defined groups provides a way to identify fundamental characteristics of goal formulation and political focus. Once formulated, these groupings facilitate insightful analysis regarding composition, aspirations, and predicted lines of operation. In *Insurgency and Terrorism*, O’Neill identifies seven insurgency types. Anarchist insurgents seek

²⁴ Ibid., 87.

²⁵ Ressa, 26.

to eliminate all institutionalized political arrangements. They view authoritative entities as either illegitimate or not required. Egalitarians seek to radically transform societal structures, through centralized control and “distributive equality,” into a completely new social system. O’Neill’s third group of insurgents, traditionalist, are similar to egalitarians in that they seek to impose a new societal structure. However, unlike their counterparts, traditionalists generally attempt to roll back the clock and reestablish a social system that existed in the past. Pluralists make up O’Neill’s fourth insurgency type. Pluralists seek “to establish a system in which the values of individual freedom, liberty and compromise are emphasized and in which political structures are differentiated and autonomous.”²⁶ Secessionist, similar to the Confederate States in the American Civil War, desire to separate themselves from the existing political community and create a independent political community. In regards to Islamic terrorism, this new entity is typically based upon Sharia. In contrast to secessionist, reformists stop short of denouncing the current political community, but instead look for more autonomy and political strength within it. These insurgents often cede to accepting autonomy vice independence. Dr. O’Neill’s final insurgency type is labeled preservationist. Unlike the previous six categories, preservationists look to maintain the status quo. Their acts of aggression are directed at those attempting to change to the existing political structure.

Of the seven types of insurgencies identified by Dr. O’Neill, Jemaah Islamiyah most closely aligns itself with those categorized as traditionalist. Traditionalist insurgents seek to displace the political system in revolutionarily fashion. The values they articulate are “primordial and sacred ones, rooted in ancestral ties and religion.” Furthermore, “the political structures they seek to establish are characterized by limited or guided participation and low autonomy, with

²⁶ O’Neill, 19.

political power in the hands of an autocratic leader supported by the nobility, army, and clergy.”²⁷

Mass participation in the political system is not encouraged.

Following the Bali terrorist bombing of 2002, Secretary of State Colin Powell articulated Jemaah Islamiyah’s aim stating, “JI’s stated goal is to create an Islamic state comprising Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the southern Philippines.”²⁸ Jemaah Islamiyah seeks to completely exchange the current, secular Indonesian political structure with one based solely on sharia law. The true aim of Jemaah Islamiyah rings clear in the radical rhetoric of the group’s reported leader, Abu Bakar Ba’asyir:

Brothers and sisters, according to the examples of the Prophet Mohammed, Islam must be wedded to the government, to the nation. It must take in the law of the State. This was the example of the Prophet. It must not be a purely personal matter. Don’t follow the police. Don’t follow the nation. Don’t separate Islam from the nation. This is wrong. According to the Prophet Mohammed, Muslims must adhere to Shaira law. Sharia law is more important than life itself. Sharia is priceless as compared to life itself. Life without Sharia is nothing.²⁹

The type of insurgency Abu Sayyaf adopted is a mix between traditionalist and secessionist. Similar to Jemaah Islamiyah, Abu Sayyaf desires the establishment of a nation ruled by Islamic law. Abdurajak Janjalani brought back from the Middle East visions of an Islamic Mindanao in the purest sense of the religion. Abu Sayyaf is not interested in having a predominately populated Muslim nation shared with a Catholic minority; they desire a purely Islamic nation under which all inhabitants, without exception, adhere to sharia. Yet where Jemaah Islamiyah seeks to displace the existing Southeast Asian governments, Abu Sayyaf wishes to completely withdraw from the Philippine government and establish an independent Islamic community. O’Neill labels insurgencies of these type secessionists. Regarding secessionists, Dr. O’Neill writes, “they renounce the political community of which they are formally a part. They seek to withdraw from it and constitute a new and independent political community.”³⁰

²⁷ O’Neill, 18.

²⁸ U.S. Embassy Tokyo, Japan, “U.S. Designates Jemaah Islamiya as Terrorist Organization”. 23 October 2002. Available from <http://www.japan.usembassy.gov/e/p/tp-sec20021023a6.html>.

²⁹ Ressa, 49.

³⁰ O’Neill. 19.

Similar to Jemaah Islamiyah, Abu Sayyaf is strictly motivated by an Islamic ideology. “The overall objective of Abu Sayyaf is the establishment of an independent and exclusive Islamic state in Mindanao.”³¹ Unlike JI, however, the political aim of Abu Sayyaf has undergone revisions since the group’s inception. “After the death of Abu Sayyaf’s founder Abdurajak Janjalani in a firefight with police in December 1998, its religious and political goals were dropped in favor of kidnapping for ransom.”³² Following the 2002 rescue of U.S. citizen Gracia Burnham, Abu Sayyaf “is returning to its Islamic roots and is using the familiar weapons of terror—bombing and assassination—in an attempt to achieve an independent Muslim republic in the southern Philippines.”³³ Abu Sayyaf eschews the nationalistic tendencies of the larger, more secular MNLF. Many believe Abu Sayyaf’s message was directly imported from the Middle East, specifically from Osama bin Laden. Indeed, Janjalani’s rhetoric mirrored bin Laden’s global plea for an Islamic struggle against all infidels. In conjunction with efforts to secure an Islamic state in Mindanao, Abu Sayyaf “also sees its objectives in Mindanao as intimately tied to an integrated effort aimed at asserting the global dominance of Islam through armed struggle and an extreme religious fervor.” Abu Sayyaf is also expanding operations to include global jihad, aligning themselves with bin Laden’s zeal in attacking infidels throughout the world.

Form of Warfare

In *Insurgency and Terrorism*, Dr. O’Neill states all insurgencies subscribe to one of three forms of warfare: terrorism, guerilla war, or conventional warfare, as delineated by the type of armed forces employed and their choices of weapons, targets and tactics. Defined by O’Neill as “the form of warfare in which violence is directed primarily against noncombatants rather than operational military and police forces or economic assets,” terrorism has been and continues to be

³¹Rabasa, 89-90.

³² O’Neill, 19.

³³ Elegant, Simon. “The Return of Abu Sayyaf”, *Time Asia Magazine*, (Internet edition), 23 August 2004. Available from <http://www.time.com/time/asia/magazine/printout/0,13675,501040830-686107,00.html>.

the form of warfare espoused by Jemaah Islamiyah.³⁴ In 1995, JI was implicated in planning to bomb eleven U.S. commercial airliners in Asia. Operation *Bojinka*, as it was referred to, was an Al Qaeda operation under the leadership of Ramzi Yousef. Yousef, Al-Qaeda's point man in Southeast Asia, was later arrested for his role in the 1993 World Trade Center attack. Six years later, Omar Al-Faruq testified to CIA agents he "organized a series of bombings across the country, sanctioned and approved by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and carried out by operatives of JI and Al-Qaeda."³⁵ On 19 April 1999, JI members bombed the Istiqlal mosque in Jakarta, Indonesian's largest mosque. The bomb that exploded in the mosque's basement wounded three people but more importantly, created fears echoed by Indonesian President B.J. Habibie who shortly thereafter warned, "this action could invite conflict between different religions."³⁶ President Habibie's fears quickly turned into reality when large mobs destroyed a church complex in the city of Ujung Pandang. Presidential elections scheduled for 7 June 1999 were believed by many analysts to be the target of the attacks.

On 2 August 2000, the *New York Times* reported, "A powerful bomb at the residence of the Philippine ambassador in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, killed 3 people and injured at least 21, including the ambassador."³⁷ Jemaah Islamiyah was implicated in the bombing. On 24 December 2000, a wave of bombing attacks on Christian churches across Indonesia left eighteen people dead and over one hundred wounded. In these attacks, thirty-eight bombs were planted in eleven cities. Twenty of the bombs exploded within thirty minutes of each other in ten different cities, including one outside Jakarta's main Roman Catholic Church. The timing of the bombings, set to occur as Christmas Eve services were about to begin, was set to exact a high casualty count. Six days later, a series of simultaneous bombing in Manila killed an additional twenty-two people.

³⁴ O'Neill, 24.

³⁵ Ressa, 101.

³⁶ Mydans, Seth. "Indonesia: Bomb Blast in Mosque", *New York Times*, 20 April 1999: A,6:3.

³⁷ Mydans, Seth. "Indonesia Bomb Kills 3", *New York Times*, 2 August 2000: A,6:4.

Jemaah Islamiyah continued planning and executing terrorist operations the following year. In December 2001, months after Al-Qaeda's attack on the U.S. homeland, authorities in Singapore uncovered a JI plot to attack the U.S. and Israeli Embassies and British and Australian diplomatic buildings in Singapore. The following October, three near simultaneous explosions in the resort town of Kuta, Bali killed over two hundred people, the majority of which were foreign tourists. In what became the nation's first open acknowledgement of internal terrorism, Indonesian Defense Minister Matori Abdul Djalil stated "The Bali bomb blast is linked to Al Qaeda with the cooperation of local terrorist."³⁸ These local terrorists would eventually be identified as Jemaah Islamiyah. On 5 August 2003, Jemaah Islamiyah operatives detonated a sports utility vehicle filled with explosives in front of the J.W. Marriott hotel in Jakarta, leaving twelve people dead and injuring more than 150. JI committed their latest terrorist attack on the Australian embassy in Jakarta. On the morning of 9 September 2004, a Daihatsu pickup truck filled with two hundred kilograms of potassium chlorate detonated outside the embassy, killing nine people and wounding two hundred twelve others.

Jemaah Islamiyah's latest attacks, the J.W. Marriott attack and the bombing of the Australian embassy, indicate an ideological shift in operations. These two attacks marked the first times the majority of casualties were Indonesians. While thirty-four Indonesians were among the two hundred deaths in Bali, all eleven deaths at the Australian embassy were Indonesian, a group including Muslims and Hindus. Sidney Jones, Asia director of the *International Crisis Group* stated, "They (JI) knew there would be Indonesian victims, but they didn't care. They only cared about the symbolic value of being able to say, we're still here, we can do this even with a huge

³⁸ Bumiller, Elisabeth. "Bush Ties Bombing at Bali Nightclub to Qaeda Network", *New York Times*, 15 October 2002.

manhunt going on for our two most wanted bombmakers.”³⁹ The attacks also ushered in the advent of JI suicide bombers, a trend many analysts feel will continue to develop.

It would be easy to mistake Abu Sayyaf’s form of warfare as guerrilla operations instead of terrorism. The group operates in familiar guerrilla fashion: small groups of soldiers operating within a rural environment, searching for targets of opportunity while avoiding major clashes with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). Yet guerrilla warfare, defined by O’Neill as “highly mobile hit-and-run attacks by lightly to moderately armed groups that seek to harass the enemy and gradually erode his will and capability,” is not Abu Sayyaf’s preferred method of warfare. Though occasional “striking forces” directly attack AFP units, a quick examination of Abu Sayyaf’s past operations reveal a dominant terrorist theme: attacking non-combatants to obtain ransoms and inculcate an atmosphere of fear.

Under the direction and financial support of Al Qaeda, Abu Sayyaf committed its first terrorist attack in 1991. On 23 December, Abu Sayyaf members bombed a Catholic church on Jolo Island using hand grenades, killing two foreign missionary women. The following year, Abdurajak Janjalani received over six thousand dollars from Al Qaeda to carry out two attacks: the assassination of Italian Father Carzedda and the bombing of a Basilan market for the purpose of disrupting provincial elections. Guerrillas assassinated Father Carzedda, a missionary for The Silsilah Movement, in Zamboanga in May 1992. On 28 August 1993 Abu Sayyaf guerillas bombed Fort Pillar in Zamboanga City, killing five people wounded forty-one others.

The event that propelled Abu Sayyaf into the national limelight was the 4 April 1995 massacre in the coastal town Ipil. During the attack, guerrillas raided seven banks and in the process burned the town center to the ground. Fifty-four civilians died in the attack and hundreds more were wounded.

³⁹ Elegant, Simon, *The Fire This Time*, Time Asia Magazine (Internet edition), Vol. 164, No.12, 20 September 2004. Available from <http://www.time.com/time/asia/magazine/printout/0,13675,501040920-695932,00.html>.

On 20 March 2000, Khaddafy Janjalani's faction attacked an Army outpost and seized more than fifty people from two Basilan schools for use as human shields during their escape. The group withdrew with twenty-seven hostages including many young children.⁴⁰ At this point, Abu Sayyaf shifted tactics from bombings and assassinations to kidnappings for ransom. On 23 April 2000, seven insurgents led by Ghalib Andang, alias Commander Robot raided a diving resort in Sipadan, an island off the western coast of Malaysia. Ten Western tourists from Germany, France, Finland and South Africa were kidnapped in the raid. Along with the Westerners, Abu Sayyaf guerillas kidnapped eleven Asian resort workers and escorted the group across the Sulu Sea to Jolo Island near Mindanao. Commander Robot demanded one million dollars for the return of each hostage. In August, Janjalani's guerrillas abducted American Muslim Jeffrey Schilling during an arranged visit to a guerilla camp. Accused of being an American spy, Schilling was held for more than seven months before he managed to escape, ending Janjalani's hopes of receiving a requested ten million in ransom money.

On 27 May 2001, Janjalani struck again by raiding Dos Palmas vacation resort located on Palawan Island. Three Americans, fifteen Filipino tourists and three Filipino workers were captured and taken to Basilan. For the next thirteen months, Janjalani led the hostages through Basilan's canopied jungles, evading capture while simultaneously arranging ransom payments. On 3 June, Commander Robot's faction kidnapped ten Western journalists and released them ten hours later for \$25,000.⁴¹

In February 2002, on the eve of the United States' military deployment to Basilan, Abu Sayyaf members exploded a bomb at a public market on the southern island of Jolo. The attack killed five people and wounded more than forty others. On 2 October, Abu Sayyaf detonated an explosive device in Zamboanga City, killing four, including an American Special Forces soldier.

⁴⁰ "Filipino Army Attacks Rebel Holding Hostages", *New York Times*, 23 April 2000, I,10:4.

⁴¹ Ressa, 115.

Additionally, CNN correspondent Maria Ressa reported the explosion injured a dozen others.⁴²

Abu Sayyaf followed this attack with another on 17 October 2002 in which six people died and more than a hundred others suffered injuries when multiple bombs exploded in two department stores in Zamboanga City. Police authorities reportedly defused up to five additional bombs described as incendiary explosive devices, each set to detonate by timers. The following year, authorities implicated Abu Sayyaf in the Davao International Airport bombing that left twenty-one dead and over one hundred injured.

Abu Sayyaf shocked president Arroyo and her administration when it detonated 3.6 kg of TNT in the passenger section of the Superferry 14 on 26 February 2004. The explosive device, installed within a television set, exploded around midnight, one hour into the ship's planned trip from Manila to Bacolod and Davao. According to investigators, Abu Sayyaf member Redendo Dellosa confessed, "the explosion was triggered by a timing device—and that he chose the cheap seats to maximize panic and loss of life."⁴³ Over one hundred civilians died in the explosion off Corregidor Island. The Superferry 14 bombing indicates increased operational capability for Abu Sayyaf. As reported by the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "it would signal a new capability to conduct attacks of a significant scale on 'soft' targets outside Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago."⁴⁴

This short examination of Abu Sayyaf's chosen form of warfare reveals many adaptations made over the course of a few years: 1) an increase in bombing attacks against civilians; 2) expansion of operations into the urban areas of Mindanao and Luzon; 3) a preference for soft vs. hard targets; and 4) use of increased technological weaponry and increased war fighting skills.

⁴² Ressa, Maria, "Extremist Blamed for Philippine Blast", *CNN* (Internet edition) 17 October 2002. Available from <http://edition/cnn.com/2002/WORLD/asiapcf/southeast/10/17/philippines.bomb/index.html>.

⁴³ Elegant, Simon. "The Return of Abu Sayyaf".

⁴⁴ Australian Government White Paper. *Transnational Terrorism: The Threat to Australia*

Strategy

The strategy adopted by Jemaah Islamiyah has been and continues to be one of urban-warfare. Attacks within Indonesian's urban centers offer key advantages exploited by JI. First, they offer a variety of lucrative hard and soft international target sets. Diplomats and Western tourist are frequent visitors to Southeast Asia's urban cities. Embassies and economic institutions provide additional targets within Jakarta, Manila, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. Secondly, an urban warfare strategy does not require an initial surge of popular support, which JI currently lacks. It does, however, provide a means of garnering this support over time. In *Insurgency and Terrorism*, Dr. O'Neill articulates this dynamic:

The essential strategy of the urban terrorist, according to Carlos Marighella, one of the foremost proponents, is to 'turn political crisis into armed conflict by performing violent actions that will force those in power to transform the political situation of the country into a military situation.' That will alienate the masses, who from then on will revolt against the army and police and thus blame them for this state of things.⁴⁵

Regional history supports JI's attempt to transform the current political struggle into a military crisis. Indonesian citizens are all too familiar dealing with a corrupt national military and police force. Indonesians watched military-to-military relations between the United States and Indonesia deteriorate in 1991 when Indonesian troops opened fire and killed more than 200 demonstrators during a protest rally in Dili.⁴⁶ The distant cries of East Timorese from 1999 can still be heard, while ongoing trials of corrupt military officers litter the front pages of Indonesian newspapers.

Thirdly, urban warfare provides a means to further overall organizational goals. Dr. O'Neill states, "Although their ultimate goals may vary, insurgents engaged in urban violence all pursue the intermediate aim of eroding the government's will to resist." One way to erode governmental will is to jeopardize the nation's economic security as demonstrated by the attack in Bali. The Australian Government estimates the Bali bombings resulted in a loss of 1.5 percent of

⁴⁵ O'Neill, 46.

⁴⁶ Smith, Anthony L., "Reluctant Partner: Indonesia", *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, Vol. 30, No.2, Summer 2003: 146.

Indonesian's gross domestic product.⁴⁷ JI terrorist attacks constantly jeopardize economic recovery efforts aimed at enticing foreign investors back into the region. Following the 5 August 2003 attack on the J.W. Marriott, the *Jakarta Post* editorialized, "Experience with the Bali bombings tell us that, with the reputation of the country and government in tatters, investors and potential investors will stay away from Indonesia, as will tourists and regular visitors."⁴⁸ In June 2004, Admiral Fargo, Commander U.S. Pacific Command, stated his belief that the likelihood of Jemaah Islamiyah achieving their overall objectives using urban warfare was nil. Yet he also acknowledged JI's negative impact upon regional economic systems. To that extent, Admiral Fargo stated JI's "willingness to use mass terror threatens the stability and prosperity of all of Southeast Asia. So the economic and political success of Southeast Asian nations, and the security upon which they depend, is being directly challenged."⁴⁹

Historically speaking, urban warfare has rarely proven a decisive insurgent strategy. For this reason, many believe Jemaah Islamiyah's urban focus is certain to change. Evidence of an adaptive shift is already evident. Reports have shown a divisive tremor shaking the foundation of JI. A large portion of JI argues against further attacking soft targets in favor of a period of organizational growth and mass mobilization; a concerted shift towards a policy of protracted warfare. Others advocate continued terrorist operations in Indonesian's populated cities and indeed have continued planning subsequent attacks. Additionally, some elements focus exclusively on bringing about an Islamic state in Indonesia, while others work to an anti-Western or anti-US agenda.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Australian Government White Paper, 48

⁴⁸ Taylor, Rachel S., "Indonesia: Terrorism's Reverberations", *World Press Review*, Vol 50, No.10, October 2003. Available from http://www.worldpress.org/article_model.cfm?article_id=1613&don't=yes.

⁴⁹ Admiral Tom Fargo, US Pacific Command address at APCSS Biennial Conference, 16 June 2004.

⁵⁰ Australian Government White Paper, 48.

In the early 1990s, Abdurajak Abu Bakr Janjalani adopted a military-focus strategy for the fledgling Abu Sayyaf. As Dr. O'Neill describes, this strategy "gives primacy to military action and makes political action subordinate."⁵¹ For Abu Sayyaf, military action is asymmetric out of necessity; AFP's conventional military capabilities greatly surpass those of Janjalani's guerilla force. The military-focus strategy is not reliant upon popular support or existing political institutions. Similar to Che Guevara's foco insurgency model, Abu Sayyaf uses military actions (terrorism) to initiate discontent and revolution prior to establishing any political entity. Indeed, the political apparatus Abu Sayyaf desires to govern an Islamic Mindanao has yet to be clearly articulated. The implications, however, of an exclusively Islamic Mindanao infer the establishment of a ruling Caliph, governing a predominate Muslim population through Islamic law.

Abu Sayyaf's military-focus strategy will remain unchanged in the near term. Political objectives will remain subservient to military actions. What will change are the strategic dynamics. The relationships between Abu Sayyaf, MNLF, MILF and Jemaah Islamiyah will increasingly gain importance. Should President Arroyo reach a negotiated peace with Salamat Husean, MILF members intent on continued jihad against the Philippine secular government may join forces with Abu Sayyaf. Comments by top Abu Sayyaf leaders bear this out: "If this sell-out succeeds, more blood will flow because the young are more determined jihadis. We will soon find out there are more Osama bin Ladens in our midst."⁵²

Environment

The environment Jemaah Islamiyah faces varies significantly throughout Southeast Asia. Non-contiguous national borders prevent many Southeastern governments from exercising absolute control. Generally speaking, the island complex offers unimpeded transnational access.

⁵¹ O'Neill, 41.

⁵² Elegant, Simon. "*The Return of Abu Sayyaf*".

Short travel distances between neighboring nations create opportunities to quickly transport personnel and resources to carry out operations or evade capture.

Singapore, located along the southern tip of the Malaysian peninsula, spans a mere two hundred forty-four square miles, roughly the size of Chicago. Originally an area covered with rainforest, by 1988 only 2.5% of Singapore remained forested.⁵³ As a result, Singapore's population overwhelmingly resides in urban areas. Indonesia, conversely, is a mixture of large urban localities with rural highlands and low-lying marshes. Extreme variations in rainfall are characteristic of Indonesia. Western Sumatra, Java, Bali and the interiors of Kalimantan receive large amounts of rain, typically 2,000 millimeters per year. Indonesian islands close to Australia, however, tend to be dry, with some areas receiving less than 1,000 millimeters per year.⁵⁴ Malaysia boasts the region's highest elevation with Mount Kinabalu stretching 13, 455 feet. The South China Sea separates Malaysia's two landmasses, which together cover over 127,300 square miles, and the Strait of Malacca separates the peninsula from Indonesia. Forested mountains extend down the center of Peninsula Malaysia, giving way to coastal plains along the western and eastern coastlines. Both Malaysian landmasses contain numerous rivers of considerable volume. The Philippines contain more than seven thousand islands, of which only twenty-five have towns.⁵⁵ The climate is considerably cooler than its southern neighbors and the islands are subjected to typhoons throughout the year. The topography of southern Philippines is rugged and mountainous. Located in the south, Mindanao is the second largest Philippine island and the second most populous, including the majority of the country's Muslim citizens.

The demographics of Southeast Asia are particularly important in evaluating Jemaah Islamiyah. With a population of 224 million (88% Muslim), Indonesia boasts the world's fourth

⁵³ LePoer, Barbara Leitch. *Singapore: A Country Study*. Washington D.C.: Library of Congress. 1991. 68.

⁵⁴ Frederick, William H. and Robert L. Worden. *Indonesia: A Country Study*. Washington D.C.: Library of Congress. 1993. 77

⁵⁵ CultureGrams World Edition: Asia and Oceania, Volume 4, 2003: 149.

largest population and is the world's largest Muslim nation.⁵⁶ Eight percent of Indonesians are Christian, two percent are Hindu and one percent is Buddhist. Muslims in Indonesia subscribe to a moderate version of the Islamic faith. Islam is also the official religion of Malaysia. A culturally diverse nation of over twenty-two million, Malaysia comprises two separate landmasses. Peninsula Malaysia is located at the southern tip of Thailand; East Malaysia is located on the island of Borneo. Ethnic Malays constitute fifty-eight percent of the population; twenty-seven percent are Chinese.⁵⁷ Singapore, located on the southern tip of Malaysia, is quite small compared to its Muslim neighbors. Singapore's population of over four million lives exclusively in urban areas. Singapore's Chinese citizens amount to seventy-seven percent of the nation's population. Singaporean Chinese dominate the political and state administrative structures and exhibit the widest range of occupational, educational, and class status.⁵⁸ Other major Asian cultures include Malay (14 %) and Indian (8).⁵⁹ The remaining Southeast Asian country encompassed in JI's goal of Pan-Islamic state is the Philippines. Over eighty-four million people reside in the Philippine islands and the majority of them (81%) claim membership in the Roman Catholic Church. Other Christian religions account for an additional 12 percent while Muslims constitute five percent.⁶⁰ Twenty percent of the Philippine's Muslim population resides on Mindanao island, while other large contingents live in the capital city of Manila.

Economically, Indonesia is still struggling to rebound from Southeast Asia's economic and financial crisis of 1997-1998. An Asian Development Bank study indicated "real earnings per worker declined by 27 percent from the pre-crisis level by the end of 1999, when inflation

⁵⁶ CultureGrams, 66.

⁵⁷ CultureGrams, 106.

⁵⁸ LePoer, 82

⁵⁹ Ibid, 169.

⁶⁰ U.S. State Department, *International Religious Freedom Report, 2004 (Philippines)*, Available from <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2004/35425pf.htm>.

jumped sharply, especially in urban areas.”⁶¹ Socially, the cost of financial ruin has been extremely high. Indonesian’s youth suffer from high unemployment rates, “contributing to the aggravation of social problems and to the general breakdown of law and order.”⁶² In the Philippines, Jemaah Islamiyah encounters another struggling economy. The Philippine economy is primarily agriculturally based, producing such crops as rice, corn and coconuts. Income distribution is uneven; a third of the population lives below the poverty level.⁶³ Hardest hit are southern islands to include Mindanao. In contrast to the Philippines and Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia’s strong economies present challenges to Jemaah Islamiyah. Singapore boasts the regions most prosperous economy. Unemployment is extremely low, and most citizens have access to economic prosperity and opportunities for advancement.⁶⁴ Likewise, Malaysia enjoys low unemployment rates and possesses a strong GDP. All Southeast Asian countries are dependent upon tourism.

The transportation network dramatically affects insurgent operations in Southeast Asia. As previously mentioned, maritime lines of communication exist throughout the region. Singapore has a robust urban transportation and communication network. Malaysia and Indonesia both have adequate urban transportation systems, but poor networks in rural areas. The Southern Philippines lacks viable transportation networks throughout Mindanao of other southern islands.

The major environmental element impacting Abu Sayyaf’s insurgency is the history of the Philippine’s Islamic Moro culture. On the southern island of Mindanao, the battle between Islam and Christianity continues despite three decades of continual conflict. Regional autonomy attained by MNLF and cries for independence from MILF rebels have not quelled Abu Sayyaf’s

⁶¹ Rabasa, Angel and Peter Chalk. *Indonesian’s Transformation and the Stability of Southeast Asia*. Santa Monica: Rand, 2001: 16.

⁶² Ibid., 16.

⁶³ CultureGrams, 152.

⁶⁴ Ibid. 172

thirst for an Islamic state governed by Islamic law. The Moro culture of resistance to non-Islamic rule fans the flames of insurrection. For Abu Sayyaf, concessions are not an option.

As previously mentioned, the southern Philippine islands offer rural insurgents advantages that include havens and isolated training locations. The rugged terrain favors small-sized military units over the larger, unwieldy mechanized government army. Abu Sayyaf members repeatedly evade capture by fleeing into canopied jungles of the country's southern islands. Their increased mobility allows them to traverse difficult terrain with relative ease. Conversely, AFP soldiers find the same terrain restrictive as they attempt to mass firepower in a timely fashion against a fleeing enemy. In addition to using terrain to their advantage, Abu Sayyaf guerrillas benefit from the short distances between neighboring islands. Recent reports indicate a migration from Mindanao to Jolo and other southern islands as Abu Sayyaf seeks to frustrate government pursuit.

The Philippine's southern islands offer Abu Sayyaf numerous lines of communication. Supplies and arms arriving from Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore represent a logistical stronghold for Abu Sayyaf. Multiple islands relieve the insurgent group of a requirement for a logistical base or large caches of weapons, eliminating potential critical vulnerabilities.

The environment does place some constraints on Abu Sayyaf. One drawback is the lack of political targets within the rural areas of Mindanao and among Philippine's southern islands. While offering excellent areas for hiding hostages and seeking refuge, the rural settings lack politically sensitive target sets and offer limited international exposure. Consequently, as Abu Sayyaf returns to a politically oriented agenda, we are witnessing more and more terror attacks in the populated cities of Zamboanga and Davao on Mindanao and more recently, a push into the capital city of Manila. This urban encroachment will continue.

Popular Support

A level of popular support is important to all insurgencies. Dr. O'Neill reminds his audience of Mao Tse-tung's words: "The richest source of power to wage war lies in the masses of the people."⁶⁵ Yet, while many insurgent strategies require high initial levels of popular support, for others, such as the strategy of urban warfare used by Jemaah Islamiyah, popular support is not a prerequisite. O'Neill divides popular support into two categories, passive and active. He describes passive support as "including individuals who quietly sympathize with the insurgents but are unwilling to provide material assistance."⁶⁶ Army Field Manual Interim 3-07.22 entitled Counterinsurgency Operations refers to passive support as the Mass Base. According to Army doctrine, members of the mass base do not actively fight for the insurgency; however they do provide intelligence and supplies.⁶⁷ Jemaah Islamiyah enjoys very limited passive support. That which they did possess is slowly eroding in the face of indiscriminate terrorist attacks that increasingly result in Muslim deaths. Indiscriminate targeting reduces the passive support of those infused with strong anti-Western sentiments. Successful urban guerillas, according to Robert Moss, "have gone to considerable pains to try to rationalize their crimes and have been very selective in choosing their targets. Terrorist can never win popular support unless they can explain their actions as something more than random criminal assaults or lunatic gestures."⁶⁸

There does appear to be a degree of active support for Jemaah Islamiyah within Southeast Asian countries. People in this category include those involved in transferring weapons and explosives throughout the region. It would also include money handlers responsible for transnational financial transactions. Jordan Mamso Abdullah is an example of an active JI

⁶⁵ O'Neill., 70.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 71.

⁶⁷ Department of the Army, Field Manual Interim 3-07.22. *Counterinsurgency Operations*, October 2004: 1-3.

⁶⁸ Sarkesian, Sam C. Revolutionary Guerilla Warfare. Chicago: Precedent Publishing, Inc. 1975, 477.

supporter. Arrested on 3 April 2004, Abdullah was charged with receiving Al Qaeda funds, exchanging them to pesos, and distributing the money to Jemaah Islamiyah terrorist accounts for use in upcoming terror acts in the Philippines.⁶⁹ Jemaah Islamiyah operatives also receive active support from abroad, receiving help securing travel arrangements and lodging accommodations. However, similar to waning passive support, the latest JI terrorist attacks may result in active supporters distancing themselves from the group. *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* indicated the majority of Muslim organizations in Southeast Asian condemned JI's terrorist tactics. The magazine reports "Among activists who have pushed for a wider application of Islamic law, there is a feeling that their cause has been harmed: even though they are not organizationally tied to the JI terrorist network, there is a 'guilt by association' effect."⁷⁰

Dr. Bard O'Neill links popular support and the military-focus strategy by saying, "Though fully aware of the value of popular support, the insurgents make no systematic, sustained effort to acquire it through extensive political organizing efforts in the rural areas. Instead proponents of the military-focus believe that popular support either is sufficient or will be a by-product of military victories."⁷¹ In the two decades of their existence, Abu Sayyaf, has yet to conjure up any large scale support within the southern Muslim community. Support that does exist among the minority Muslim population is mainly derived out of fear. Yet even faced with the prospect of violent reprisals, the majority of Mindanao's Muslim population disapproves of and is growing tired of the terror. The frustration of local citizens is evident in a plea from Basilan's governor who in April 2000 offered his citizens a \$730 bounty for each Abu Sayyaf guerrilla they could kill."⁷²

Fully aware of its importance to their campaign, Abu Sayyaf looks for opportunities to increase popular support. Insurgents offer new recruits large sums of money to join hands in jihad

⁶⁹ Newflash.org, 7 May 2004.

⁷⁰ Gee, John. *Washington Report for Middle East Affairs*, Vol. 22, No. 8. October 2003. 37.

⁷¹ O'Neill, 41.

⁷² "Philippine Troops Press Attack on Rebels," *New York Times*, 28 April 2000, A,8:1.

against the Philippine government and Western nations. Initial payments of fifteen hundred dollars per recruit are not uncommon. These payments resonate among a poverty stricken population with few prospects for improvement. When possible, Abu Sayyaf injects additional funds into Muslim communities by paying for goods and services well in excess of their market value. Civilians who agree to deliver supplies and warn of approaching AFP soldiers are paid handsomely. Additionally, Abu Sayyaf has been known to fund community projects for Muslim villages. In a December 2001 interview with the *New York Times*, AFP Major General Cimatú commented, “The secret of the Abu Sayyaf is that the people are poor. With the ransom money that they give to villagers they become Robin Hoods. The people support them.”⁷³

Government efforts to reduce the amount of support Abu Sayyaf receives from MILF threaten to further hamper popular support. In order for MILF to remain a legitimate contributor to ongoing governmental peace talks, they must distance themselves from suggestions of collusion with Abu Sayyaf. President Arroyo’s administration is maintaining an uncomfortable level of pressure on MILF to not only remain aloof, but to condemn the terrorist tactics of Abu Sayyaf guerrillas. Within the Muslim community, lack of implicit support from MNLF and MILF could reduce what little passive support Abu Sayyaf currently enjoys.

Organization

The exact size of Jemaah Islamiyah remains difficult to accurately ascertain. Initial estimates range from a few hundred to upwards of five thousand. Regional efforts to detain JI members have significantly reduced the number of active operatives and leaders. Through February 2004, two hundred and fifty JI members have been arrested.⁷⁴ Despite these efforts, authorities feel the group is still strong. Recent estimates report about three thousand JI members, two thousand of which reside in Indonesia.

⁷³ Mydans, Seth, “Philippine Troops Hunt Elusive Foes,” *New York Times*, 30 December 2001, A,8:1.

⁷⁴ Abuza, Zachary, “Learning by Doing: Al Qaeda’s Allies in Southeast Asia”, *Current History*, April 2004, 173.

The spiritual leader, the amir of Jemaah Islamiyah is Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. With the exception of the late Abdullah Sungkar, Ba'asyir is the only one to have held this position. A charismatic leader and religious teacher, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir has been dubbed by many as the Asian Osama bin Laden.⁷⁵ Ba'asyir is currently on trial in Jakarta, charged with masterminding the bombing of the J.W. Marriott Hotel on 5 August 2003.

Indonesian Riduan Issamuddin, more commonly known as Hambali, served as Jemaah Islamiyah's Operations Chief until he was arrested in Thailand in August 2003. Hambali, a three-year veteran of the Soviet-Afghanistan War, served as the coordinating link between Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah from the groups inception. He is believed to be the "only non-Arab in Al Qaeda's military committee."⁷⁶ In addition to Ops Chief, Hambali served as chairman of a five-member shura, a Regional Advisory Council consisting of four regional commanders and several functional department heads. Hambali's impact on global terrorism is well known. President Bush has referred to him as "one of the world's most lethal terrorist," and Australian Prime Minister Howard claimed Hambali was "the main link between Al-Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah."⁷⁷ Within weeks of Hambali's arrest, Aris Sumarsono, known locally as Zulkarnaen, replaced him. Unlike his predecessor, Zulkarnaen is an educated man, a former student of biology at an Indonesian university. Officials say behind his quiet demeanor, "Belies a ferocious commitment to radical Islam and a determination to wage violent jihad to replace Indonesia's secular government with an Islamic one."⁷⁸ As reported in the *Taipei Times*, Zulkarnaen was a protégé of Abdullah Sungkar and a student of Al Mukmim Islamic boarding school.⁷⁹ Of particular note, Jane's Intelligence Review reported the forty-year-old Zulkarnaen "is one of the few Southeast

⁷⁵ Ressa, 45.

⁷⁶ Kuppusamy, Baradan. "Hambali: The Driven Man", Asia Times (Internet edition), 19 August 2003. Available at http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/EH19Ae06.html.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ *Taipei Times* (Internet version), 20 November 2003. Available from <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/world/archives/2003/11/20/2003076548>.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

Asian activists to have trained in Afghanistan under Osama bin Laden.”⁸⁰ Thus with Zulkarnaen in charge of operations, Jemaah Islamiyah retains its critical link with Al-Qaeda’s leadership, finances, training and occasionally, directive guidance.

Jemaah Islamiyah’s organization structure has undergone several iterations throughout the years. In 1996, Jemaah Islamiyah divided Southeast Asia into four operational territorial groups referred to as mantiqis: Mantiqi 1 encompasses Malaysia, Singapore and Southern Thailand. Mantiqi 2 is comprises of Indonesia, with the exception of Sulawesi and Kalimantan. Mantiqi 3 includes Philippines Brunei, Sulawesi and Kalimantan. The fourth territorial region, Mantiqi 4, includes Indonesia’s Irian Jaya and Australia. Constructed along functional lines, Jemaah Islamiyah mantiqis generally possess the following divisions: Missionary, Training and Jihad; Economics; Front Organizations; and International Affairs.

The Global War on Terrorism has forced Jemaah Islamiyah to reshape its command structure. Recent information indicates Jemaah Islamiyah’s organization has changed substantially, becoming much more decentralized. On 12 October 2004, *Asia Times Online* reported, “There is no longer a regional shura (an assembly that meets for mutual consultation). Nor are there the mantiqis, districts or territories, made up of several branches, or wakalahs, that once composed the JI organization.”⁸¹ Evidence indicates JI has evolved into a series of smaller independent cells under the leadership of a few key individuals working for a central command. These largely autonomous cells report to fewer commanders, eliminating multiple levels of bureaucracy and accelerating decision-making. Southeast Asian analyst Sidney Jones believes JI’s decentralized focus goes even further. Jones believes “Individual units of JI may be acting on their own initiative, without going through a central command structure.” She further states,

⁸⁰ Blanche, Ed. “Terrorism and Insurgency”, *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, Vol. 16, No.8, August 2004: 39.

⁸¹ Yeo Wei Meng, “Bali in the Shadow of Terror”, *Asia Times* (Internet edition); 13 October 2004. Available from http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/FJ13Ae03.html.

“Individual members may be farming out their services to other, newly formed organizations.”⁸²

There are also strong indications that Jemaah Islamiyah is breaking into smaller independent splinter groups.⁸³

In addition to forming smaller, decentralized units, Jemaah Islamiyah developed a Special Forces unit referred to as Laskar Khos. Led by Zulkarnaen, its objective is to carry out assassinations and suicide bombing operations. The *Associated Press* reported “Asmar Latin Sani, an alleged bomber whose severed head was found in the wreckage of the Marriott Hotel blast in Jakarta in August (2003), was believed to have been a Laskar Khos militant working for Zulkarnaen.”⁸⁴

Successes in the Global War on Terror placed temporary constraints upon Jemaah Islamiyah’s leadership. The arrests of formative JI leaders possessing ties to Al Qaeda have forced the next generation of guerillas to the forefront of the organization. This upcoming leadership class may be the last among JI members to have trained and fought in Afghanistan, and the last to enjoy personal ties with bin Laden. This bodes well for governments trying to eliminate them, though the excitement is tempered with the understanding that many senior members remain at large. These leaders include operations chiefs, JI’s Chief Financier, top explosives experts and central command members.

The size of Abu Sayyaf has varied widely throughout the organization’s brief history. At its inception in 1991, Abdurjarak Janjalani mustered up around thirty operatives, a combination of dissidents from the MNLF and Filipinos who had fought with the Afghan mujahedeen against the Soviets.⁸⁵ By 1996, Abu Sayyaf’s membership had climbed to three hundred and fifty.⁸⁶

⁸² Jones, Sydney. “Easy Assumptions No Key to Diabolical Problem”. *International Crisis Group*. 11 September 2004. Available from <http://www.icg.org/home/index.cfm?id=2975&1=1>.

⁸³ Yeo Wei Meng, “Bali in the Shadow of Terror.”

⁸⁴ Gutkin, Steven. “New Terror Chief Planning Attacks”. *Associated Press* (Internet edition), November 2003. Available from <http://209.157.64.200/focus/f-news/1024694/posts>.

⁸⁵ Linden, Edward V., *World Terrorism*. New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc. 2002: 51.

⁸⁶ Parry, Richard Lloyd. *Independent*. 29 August 2000.

Periodic recruiting drives increased membership, but only temporarily. Successful ransom negotiations in 2001-2002 spurred a recent recruiting push, aided by promises of lucrative salaries and new weaponry. Analysts at the Center for Defense Information (CDI) believe membership rose to roughly 1,200 during those years.⁸⁷ Since the beginning of GWOT, its numbers have once again fallen. Large numbers of Abu Sayyaf soldiers have been arrested while many others have died in clashes with AFP soldiers. Current estimates are hampered by organizational splits and increasingly independent operations.

Abu Sayyaf is a mix of foreign trained guerrillas and younger soldiers who have yet to travel beyond the Southeast Asian area. “The majority of the group’s members are Muslim youths, with many of the older cadres reportedly veterans of the Afghan war.”⁸⁸ At the individual level, the motivations for joining Abu Sayyaf appear to vary widely. Gracia Burnham noted numerous examples of defections throughout the ranks, which indicates waning or lack of support for organizational goals.

Following the death of Abdurajak Janjalani, Abu Sayyaf split into at least two factions, each operating independently of the other. Of the members who struggled to obtain overall leadership responsibilities, Ghalib Andang and Khadaffy Janjalani enjoyed widespread support. A defining moment for Abu Sayyaf occurred in December 2003 when Andang, a.k.a. Commander Robot, was captured on the island of Jolo. Analysts at CDI believe, “His arrest and death of key supporters in the group opened the way for an internal coup by another Abu Sayyaf leader, Khadaffy Janjalani, who is the younger brother of Abu Sayyaf’s founder and a veteran of the war against the Soviets in Afghanistan.”⁸⁹ Though multiple factions still exist, the Philippine government recognizes Janjalani as Abu Sayyaf’s leader and holds him responsible for the group’s political agenda.

⁸⁷ Clark, Emily. CDI Terrorism Project. 5 March 2002. Available from <http://cdi.org/terrorism/sayyaf-pr.cfm>

⁸⁸ Ibid., 90.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

The organizational structure of Abu Sayyaf is simplistic. Each group operates independently in cells typically numbering from twenty to thirty members. As highlighted by Gracia Burnham, the groups often converge and remain together for days and at times weeks. Most likely these meetings facilitate overall strategy development and operational planning. A recent addition to the cellular structure has been the development of a group of specially trained assassins. In an attempt to adapt to AFP counterterrorism campaigns, Kit Colliers of the Australian National University of Canberra says Abu Sayyaf established an urban assassination squad known as Fisabilillah, or the 'Path of God'.

External Support

Critical to Jemaah Islamiyah's success is the amount of external support required to remain functional. Dr. O'Neill emphasizes the role of outside aid by stating "Unless governments are utterly incompetent, devoid of political will, and lacking resources, insurgent organizations normally must obtain outside assistance if they are to succeed."⁹⁰ JI's small size, extensive operational reach and complex missions require a substantial amount of assistance in the form of finances, military training and technical expertise, access to explosives and small arms and safe havens. Thus far, JI has succeeded in receiving aid from state and non-state actors from across the globe. Access to external aid must continue for JI to sustain its insurgency.

Jemaah Islamiyah's external donors are both local and international. U.S. State Department investigations revealed, "JI receives money and logistic assistance from Middle Eastern and South Asian contacts, nongovernmental organizations, and other groups—including Al Qaeda."⁹¹ Singaporean sources report, "scores of JI members received military training in Afghanistan, and that JI members received over \$140,000 over three years from Al Qaeda."⁹²

⁹⁰ O'Neill, 111.

⁹¹ U.S. State Department. Patterns of Global Terrorism: 2003. Appendix B. Available from <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/2003/31711.html>.

⁹² Huang, Reyko and Colin McCullough. "In the Spotlight: Jemaah Islamiyah", CDI Terrorism Project. 18 October 2002. Available from <http://cdi.org/terrorism/ji-pr.cfm>.

Last year, the *Associated Press* reported, “cash believed to come in from Al Qaeda to finance attacks is hand carried to Indonesia via Malaysia and arms and explosives are entering Indonesia through the largely unpatrolled waterways between Mindanao Island in the southern Philippines and Indonesia’s Sulawesi island.”⁹³ In terms of military training, JI members not sent to Afghanistan received military instruction primarily in Moro Islamic Liberation Front camps in the Philippines. Here they receive training from instructors belonging to MILF, Al Qaeda, and their own organization. Mohamed Nasir Abbas, a Malaysian who commanded Mantiqi 3, confessed to interrogators that after studying warfare and weaponry in Afghanistan, he taught at several Jemaah Islamiyah training camps in the southern Philippines and Afghanistan.⁹⁴ Philippine General Victor Corpus recently arrested seven militants in Indonesia’s North Sulawesi region who admitted plans to train with Moros guerillas in Mindanao.⁹⁵

Similar to Jemaah Islamiyah, Abu Sayyaf enjoys extensive external support from a variety of actors, both state and non-state. During her captivity, Gracia Burnham stated the group received continual supplies of arms and ammunition. When asked how the arms were acquired, her captors replied, “Oh, the army. We pay a lot more than it should cost, of course. So somebody’s making a lot of money. But at least we get what we need.”⁹⁶ Claims of government corruption and collusion with Abu Sayyaf are all too common. In June 2001, local residents testified government forces allowed Abu Sayyaf guerrillas to escape following a daylong siege of rural Lamitan. Hostages held during the siege added testimony to substantiate these claims, yet no AFP soldiers were found to be at fault. Burnham recalls the period of early 2002 when she and fellow captives noticed a dramatic increase in the group’s food quantity and supply. Much to her surprise, AFP soldiers delivered rice, fish, coffee and sugar to Abu Sayyaf members on multiple

⁹³ Gutkin, Steven. “Al-Qaida Replacing Leaders”, *Associated Press* (Internet edition), 2003. Available from <http://crisis.wakeful.net/2003/indonesia/html>.

⁹⁴ “Malaysian Jemaah Islamiyah suspect claims he Took Orders from Bashir”, *Asia News* (Internet edition), 2 April 2004. Available from <http://asia.news.yahoo.com/040402/ap/d81mhj5o0.html>.

⁹⁵ Gutkin, Steven. “Al-Qaida Replacing Leaders”.

⁹⁶ Burnham, 150.

occasions. Burnham reports, “We were being told that it was because Sabaya (Abu Sayyaf spokesman) was wheeling and dealing with the AFP general of that area over how to split up any ransom that might be paid.” She also relates a negotiation where, “Sabaya was willing to give the general 20 percent of the action. But the messenger reported back that this wasn’t enough. The general wanted 50 percent.”⁹⁷

Abu Sayyaf benefits from relationships with other insurgencies, namely, Al Qaeda, Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Jemaah Islamiyah. Burnham explained how in July 2001 her captors brought her and other hostages to a MILF camp for refuge from pursuing AFP soldiers. MILF camps also provided basic and advanced military training for Abu Sayyaf insurgents.

Abu Sayyaf’s external connections extend beyond Philippine borders. On 6 November 2003, the *Manila Times* reported the arrest and deportation of a Filipino-American accused of selling weapons to Abu Sayyaf guerrillas. The newspaper reported United States Customs agents seized a package of Victor Moore Infante containing weapons parts addressed to his safe house in Zamboanga City. Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo told the *Manila Times* Infante received the illegal weapons from associates in Oakland, CA and distributed them to Abu Sayyaf in both Zamboanga and Basilan. Prior to his arrest, Victor Infante was listed as one of America’s most wanted fugitives.⁹⁸

Government Response

Following 9/11, President Megawati completed a previously planned trip to Washington for a meeting with President Bush. During the visit, President Megawati offered her country’s support against global terrorism. Yet, even as she committed her government to the fight against terror, party leaders in Indonesia condemned her stance and generated great internal friction. Upon returning to Indonesia, President Megawati’s initial commitment to action wavered in the

⁹⁷ Ibid. 222-223.

⁹⁸ Depasupil, William B., “Abu’s Arms Supplier Nabbed”, *Manila Times* (Internet edition). 6 November 2003. Available from http://www.manilatimes.net/national/2003/nov/06/top_stories/20031106top8.html.

face of fierce political debate. In the end, Indonesia was the last Southeast Asian country to officially acknowledge the existence of terrorism within its borders. Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines, nations infested with JI cells, quickly demonstrated steady resolve to combat transnational terrorism. In December 2001, Singapore uncovered a mature JI cell operating established within its borders and detained thirteen of its members. Indonesia, on the other hand, received harsh local and international scrutiny for its failure to address overwhelming evidence indicating JI's presence within its borders.

Three years after the 9/11 attacks, Sydney Jones remains skeptical about Indonesia's commitment to eradicating Jemaah Islamiyah. In a recent article published in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Jones commented, "We've heard vigorous condemnations of terrorism and violence, but the words "Jemaah Islamiyah" have hardly been mentioned by anyone in authority. And if you can't name it, you can't fight it."⁹⁹ Government reluctance to publicly denounce JI and failure to introduce effective counterinsurgency measures has resulted in limited gains. Jones' admonitions to combat ongoing recruitment campaigns, eliminate administrative corruption, and educate Indonesians on Jemaah Islamiyah appear to be falling on deaf ears.

Dr. O'Neill would sympathize with Ms. Jones, for he believes "Of all the variables that have a bearing on the progress and outcome of insurgencies, none is more important than government response."¹⁰⁰ Without a firm and consistent government stance against JI, young Indonesians will be receptive to insurgent recruiting efforts; thus the next generation of JI operatives emerges as a consequence of Indonesia's failure to act immediately and decisively.

While Indonesia seeks to galvanize governmental resolve against terrorism, the Philippines continue its determined counterterrorism campaign against Abu Sayyaf. A country embroiled in insurgency since its independence from American rule, the Philippines is no stranger

⁹⁹ Jones, Sydney, *What Indonesians Must Explain*. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 23 September 2004. Available from <http://www.icg.org/home/index.cfm?id=3016&1=1>.

¹⁰⁰ O'Neill, 125.

to terrorism. Philippine president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo wasted no time in condemning the 9/11 attacks. Weeks following the Al Qaeda attack, President Arroyo's administration passed a law against money laundering in an attempt to address antiquated banking legislation.¹⁰¹ The new laws require disclosure of bank deposits in excess of \$80,000, eight times the threshold of U.S. banks. Though considerably larger than the \$10,000 disclosure clause found in U.S. courts, this legislation is a leap in the right direction.

The Philippine government is working with both regional neighbors and international state actors to eliminate Abu Sayyaf. As reported in an October edition of *Arab News*, the government recently helped U.S. officials pay three Filipino informants \$330,000 each for information leading to the death of Hamsiraji Sali, a senior Abu Sayyaf leader.¹⁰² Sali was wanted by U.S. officials for the deaths of Americans Guillermo Sobero and Martin Burnham, both killed while being held captive by the Abu Sayyaf Group.

Despite achieving considerable success against Abu Sayyaf, the Philippine government has occasionally stumbled. President Arroyo's administration has thus far willingly facilitated the transfer of ransom money for several Abu Sayyaf hostages. This controversial policy has succeeded in securing the release of several prisoners, yet simultaneously spurred Abu Sayyaf to continue the practice of kidnapping Westerners. In August 2000, six Westerners received their freedom after the Qadhafi International Foundation for Charity Associations, headed by the son of Libyan President Mu'ammarr Qadhafi, delivered \$25 million to Abu Sayyaf for their release. On at least one occasion, ransom money did not result in hostage releases. The family of Americans Mark and Gracia Burnham paid \$300,000 to the Abu Sayyaf Group in March 2002, yet the guerillas did not release their hostages.

¹⁰¹ Landler, Mark. "The Philippine Moves Against Bank Secrecy", *New York Times*, 13 October 2001, C,1:5.

¹⁰² *Arab News*, 26 October 2004.

Despite setbacks, the counterterrorism campaign against Abu Sayyaf continues today. Philippine Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Narciso Abaya believes ASG leader Khadafy Janjalani is hiding in Mindanao, protected by members of Jemaah Islamiya and soldiers belonging to MILF's Special Operations Group. General Abaya also stated "about 400 Abu Sayyaf members were still on the prowl in Mindanao and other parts of the country."¹⁰³ In regard to the MILF, President Arroyo spearheaded the organization of an international monitoring team led by Malaysia and assisted by other regional governments. These observers monitor MILF—Abu Sayyaf interactions and report inconsistencies with ongoing peace initiatives. In regards to the ongoing insurgency, the Philippine government continues its pursuit of Abu Sayyaf members throughout the country and retains its commitment to bringing them to justice and stopping the violence.

Countering Adaptations: An Effects-Based U.S. Regional Strategy

In developing a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy for Southeast Asia, one must balance unique regional complexities with the adaptive nature of Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf. By examining these two data points in light of current U.S. policy, it becomes possible to devise a set of effects necessary for the United States to succeed regionally in the Global War on Terrorism.

Southeast Asian Complexities

Jemaah Islamiyah, Abu Sayyaf and through association, Al Qaeda, successfully exploit vulnerabilities inherent to Southeast Asia. The fledgling democracy of Indonesia and weak governmental control over the southern Philippine islands create opportunities for insurgents to operate with limited impunity. Combined with an absence of rule of law on sparsely populated

¹⁰³ Labog-Javellana, Juliet, Christian V. Esguerra and Alcuin Papa, "Metro Bomb Plot Foiled; 4 Abu Men Nabbed", Inquirer News Service, 30 March 2004. Available from http://www.inq7.net/nat/2004/mar/31/text/nat_1-2p.htm

islands, the region offers a population susceptible to campaigns of terror. Additionally, well-established transnational criminal activity provides functioning infrastructures for use by terrorist organizations. Throughout the region, outdated judicial procedures frustrate efforts to detain and question suspected terrorist. An additional concern facing Southeast Asian governments is inadequate maritime controls.

Porous borders, combined with massive inbound tourist and business flows, open immigration regimes, limited identity and document fraud detection, inadequately trained or corrupt officials, poor coordination between border control agencies and various security agencies, and limited immigration and customs control capacities all provide an environment in which terrorist can flourish.¹⁰⁴

Substandard education systems provide additional vulnerabilities to regional governments. Many madrassas and pesantren within Southeast Asia teach violent strains of Islam. As explained in the Australian Government's White Paper regarding terrorism in Southeast Asia, "many South Asian and Middle Eastern madrassas teach only a rigid and doctrinaire interpretation of the Quran, with a strong emphasis on militant jihad." Outside of the formal Islamic education system, community-run Islamic boarding schools, or pesantrens, are often used by Muslim extremist as a "vehicle to propagate extremist ideology and for recruitment purposes."¹⁰⁵ For families lacking financial means, few opportunities exist to receive a secular or moderate Islamic education.

As in the Middle East, ongoing regional violence serves as a recruiting tool and a source of on-the-job training for young insurgents. For the past several decades, Southeast Asia has housed several active Islamic insurgencies. Muslims living on Mindanao have resisted government rule since the nation declared independence in 1946. In Indonesia, fierce fighting has embroiled Muslim and Christian citizens of Ambon for the past ten years and separatist unrest continues in Aceh. These ongoing conflicts serve as proving grounds, places where war-fighting tactics are refined, command structures are developed, and advanced technology is fielded. Many

¹⁰⁴ Australian Government White Paper. 42.

¹⁰⁵ Australian Government White Paper, 41.

of Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf guerrillas received their initial battlefield experiences participating in these conflicts. Additionally, Southeast Asia is home to thousands of Afghan-Soviet War veterans. These soldiers bring to Southeast Asia not only military expertise, but perhaps more importantly, a link to global Islamic jihad.

An Adapting Enemy

The Global War on Terrorism in Southeast Asia has achieved limited success. Hundreds of Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf members are either dead or behind bars. Financial wells are drying out, safe havens and training camps are rapidly disappearing, and regional partners are cooperating on a scale not previously witnessed. These efforts have forced both insurgent groups to either adapt to their changing environments, or face elimination. Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah have thus far succeeded in meeting the increased threats head-on. They have proven to be a resilient bunch. They have evolved, and thus remain viable insurgencies.

Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf are both adapting to the Global War on Terrorism. Both have incorporated suicide bombings into their repertoire of terrorist acts, and as reported by Australian government officials, this trend is likely to continue. Targets of terrorist attacks increasingly include Catholic Filipinos and westerners in Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia. The Australian Government's White Paper also reports, "Economic, religious, entertainment and political targets, especially those identified with the West or Christianity, are high on Jemaah Islamiyah's target list. So are symbols of secularism and democratic change."¹⁰⁶ The recent Abu Sayyaf shift away from hostage taking is aided by increased external financial aid and an extremely low cost of terrorist operations. Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah will increasingly rely on external support from non-state actors such as Al Qaeda, and state actors when opportunities present themselves.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. 53.

Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf demonstrate a propensity to operate within Southeast Asia's urban settings. Populated cities provide internationally relevant target sets, a variety of Western actors, and the potential for mass casualties. The attack on Superferry 14 reveals Abu Sayyaf's willingness to extend its operational reach beyond the borders of Mindanao and Basilan islands, while Jemaah Islamiyah operational reach remains unquestioned. Organizationally, both insurgent groups experienced tremendous leadership turnover in the last few years. Out of necessity, the role of operational leaders in providing direction and organizational guidance will diminish. In a similar vein, each group will continue decentralizing their organizational structures to add redundancy and stability. These autonomous insurgent groups will increasingly cooperate with other terrorists, leveraging intelligence, material resources, and financial assets. An expansive network-of-networks of terrorist is quickly emerging.

To succeed against Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf, the U.S. regional counterterrorism strategy must reflect the following adaptations within these two insurgencies: 1) increasing reliance on Al Qaeda and like transnational terrorists; 2) decentralized operations; 3) increased use of suicide bombers; 4) increased emphasis on bombing soft targets and assassinations; 5) Abu Sayyaf's return to initially stated political agenda; 6) more discriminate targeting by Jemaah Islamiyah; 7) increased focus on urban warfare; 8) swell of new recruits for both Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf.

Current Strategies

The September 2002 National Security Strategy provides the outline for the Global War on Terrorism. The strategy, enumerated in Section III, is directed to first "disrupt and destroy terrorist organizations of global reach and attack their leadership; command control and communications; material support; and finances." To achieve this objective the U.S. is committed to 1) direct and continuous action using all elements of national power; 2) identifying and destroying the threat before it reaches the United States; and 3) denying further sponsorship,

support, and sanctuary to terrorists by convincing or compelling states to accept their sovereign responsibilities.

The National Strategy for Combating Terrorism dated February 2003 adds fidelity to the nation's focus on countering global terrorism. As stated in this document, "the intent of our national strategy is to stop terrorist attacks against the United States, its citizens, its interest, and our friends and allies around the world and ultimately, to create an international environment inhospitable to terrorists and all those who support them."¹⁰⁷ To accomplish these tasks, the United States committed itself to a four-prong policy of defeat, deny, diminish and defend. The U.S. is intent on defeating terrorist organizations by attacking sanctuaries; leadership; command, control, and communications; material support; and finances. It is committed to denying further sponsorship, support and sanctuary to terrorist while simultaneously diminishing the underlying conditions terrorist seek to exploit. Finally, the U.S. Counterterrorism strategy is set to defend the United States, its citizens and interest at home and abroad.

Southeast Asian Effects-Based Counterterrorism Strategy

The United States counterterrorism strategy in Southeast Asia is failing. Though U.S. efforts against Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf have yielded limited gains, both insurgent groups continue to operate, applying increased pressure upon regional governments and the international community. Nearly three and half years following the inception of GWOT, these insurgencies have grown in capability and operational reach. Their adaptive, resourceful nature warrants an updated strategic approach employing the full arsenal of U.S. instruments of national power, prioritized for maximum effectiveness. The importance of a prioritized approach is best articulated by Admiral Thomas Fargo, Commander, Pacific Command, who during testimony before the House Armed Services Committee stated,

¹⁰⁷ Pope, William P., Principle Deputy Director for Counterterrorism, address at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace at the National Bureau of Asian Research, 22 September 2004.

Philosophically, our approach to the terror threat has both near-term and long-term components. In the near term, we have to stop immediate threats against our citizens, our friends, our property, and vital infrastructure – in short, we have to stop the violence. So this near-term effort included proactive defensive measures. Clearly, we don't see military action as the sole or even primary instrument of national power in this fight – intelligence sharing and law enforcement lead much of this effort. These near-term efforts are an essential but incomplete solution, because the war on terrorism, like the fight against other transnational threats, cannot be won by attrition alone. Terrorist can multiply faster than they can be captured or killed. So our long-term effort is focused on strengthening the region's democratic institutions that provide security at the economic, social, and physical (i.e. education, law enforcement, basic services) levels.¹⁰⁸

As Admiral Fargo insists, military action in Southeast Asia is a supporting effort. Primarily, it provides a basic short-term security environment needed for the development of long-term economic and political infrastructure changes. A more accurate prioritized list of instruments of national power critical to success in Southeast Asia include information/intelligence, diplomatic, economic, judicial, law enforcement, customs and military training. Elements of these instruments of power can be seen in ongoing U.S. efforts to pursue regional terrorists and to assist Southeast Asian countries develop capabilities needed to subdue Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf. To date, their inefficient employment has minimized their cumulative affect. Critical of U.S. efforts in the Philippines, Bishop Felixberto Calang, of the advocacy group InPeace Mindanao remarked, "Obviously, the U.S.'s role in the so-called war against terror here has not eliminated the Abu Sayyaf, which has been giving Islam a bad name. The question I'd like to ask the Americans is this: Did they make Filipinos safe from terrorists or did they, in fact, only make us more vulnerable?"¹⁰⁹

In order to succeed against Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf, the U.S. regional counterterrorism strategy requires additional effects from the following national instruments of national power, prioritized in the following order: information, diplomatic, economic, financial, law enforcement, customs/maritime, judicial and military.

¹⁰⁸ Admiral Thomas B. Fargo, Commander U.S. Pacific Command, testimony to the House Armed Services Committee regarding U.S. Pacific Command Posture, 31 March 3, 2004.

¹⁰⁹ Conde, Carlos H. New Analysis: Reawakening of Philippine rebels, *International Herald Tribune online*, 22 February 2005.

Information

An effective information campaign is arguably the most important deterrent to regional terrorism. As such, the regional strategy must develop a more effective information campaign designed to win the hearts and minds of Southeast Asia's Muslim population. Following the U.S. invasion of Iraq, anti-American sentiment has steadily risen within the world's Muslim communities. These attitudes must be defused at all cost. One manner of accomplishing this aim is to promote good news stories of positive U.S.—Islamic interactions. The United States should strive to broadcast messages of success, security and emerging democratic processes throughout the world. The December 2004 election of Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai and successful 2005 Iraqi parliamentary elections demonstrate the ability of Islamic societies to succeed despite the presence of regional terrorism. Likewise, messages of human rights victories and women suffrage should flood Southeast Asian media outlets. Likewise, efforts to publicly acknowledge policy failures are equally important. These open statements build trust, defuse anti-American sentiments and proactively mitigate adversarial media usage. To further trust, declarations of failure should also identify corrective action. The United States must defuse the myth of a secular America at war with Islam, challenging the very existence of Muslims worldwide.

A regional strategy should reflect the fact that Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah represent a small minority of Southeast Asia's expansive Muslim population. As reported a recent Australian government study, "The vast majority of the population of South-East Asia rejects not only the callous violence of terrorist groups but also their goals and ideology."¹¹⁰ United States officials must leverage moderate Muslim clerics, an extended history of tolerant Islam in Southeast Asia and existing Islamic institutions. Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesian's two largest Muslim organizations help provide welfare and education to their fellow citizens and both organizations are firmly opposed to terrorism and support new anti-terrorism

¹¹⁰ Australian Government White Paper, 38.

decrees for Indonesia.¹¹¹ The exploits of these groups need to reverberate throughout Muslim societies.

Equally important is regional acceptance and public recognition of the existence of Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah. Critical of Indonesia's response to terrorism, Analyst Sydney Jones points out "more than four years after JI first undertook bombings on Indonesian soil—in May 2000 in Medan—no one in the Indonesian government has gone on national television at prime time and carefully laid out the case against JI, the nature of the threat they pose, and what concrete steps the government is prepared to undertake to counter it."¹¹² The fight against transnational terrorism must be taken to the people.

During a time when neither Abu Sayyaf nor Jemaah Islamiyah is successfully mobilizing popular support, it is imperative U.S. and Asian government officials aggressively educate moderate Muslims on the current nature of local insurgencies. Linkages between Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah, and the destructive results of their terror campaigns provide identifiable, indisputable evidence of the negative nature of Islamic extremism.

Diplomatic

Most analysts are in agreement the war on terrorism in Southeast Asia will fail in the absence of regional cooperation. Successes within one country can be quickly negated through the inaction of neighboring nations. Known and undiscovered connections between Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah make regional cooperation essential in disabling the transnational network. Analysts Huang and McCullough believe, "it is perhaps here that Washington can play a critical role—by strengthening diplomatic relations and providing economic and political incentives

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Jones, Sydney, "Buying guns, explosives, passport as easy as buying rice", *Jakarta Post*, 11 September 2004, Available from <http://www.icg.org/home/index.cfm?id=2972&1=1>.

bilaterally and through regional organizations such as Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).”¹¹³

Diplomacy in Southeast Asia is wholly inadequate to bring about lasting success in the GWOT. No where is this more evident than the dismal performance of Southeast Asian nations to ratify the twelve protocols and conventions regarding terrorism. Through various channels, the United States must encourage Southeast Asian countries to become signatories to the twelve terrorism conventions and protocols. As of 2003, only three of Southeast Asia’s countries were signatories to six or more conventions/protocols, and only the Philippines had ratified them all. Cambodia and Thailand recorded the worst performance with four conventions ratified, while Indonesia ratified only five. A member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the United States is strategically poised to galvanize the collective strength of fellow members, namely China, Japan, Australia and Russia, to assist Southeast Asian nations convert supportive rhetoric into actions that actually fulfill their ratifying obligations.

Through aggressive diplomacy, the United States must pressure coalition partners to refrain from negotiating with terrorists. In 2000, Libya, Germany and France negotiated a hostage release with Abu Sayyaf. Four Western hostages gained their freedom to the tune of \$25 million dollars with which Abu Sayyaf used “to purchase new weapons and equipment, such as state-of-the-art speedboats, advanced communications devices, and even weapons obtained from corrupt Filipino troops.”¹¹⁴ As long as coalition partners are willing to pay ransoms for hostages, kidnapping will continue to be a lucrative option for Abu Sayyaf. Incredibly large ransom sums fund increased patronage and undermine the belief that local governments can eradicate terrorism.

¹¹³ Huang, Reyko and Colin McCullough. “In the Spotlight: Jemaah Islamiyah”.

¹¹⁴ Desker, Barry and Kumar Ramakrishna. *Forging an Indirect Strategy in Southeast Asia*, The Washington Quarterly, Vol. 25, No. 2, Spring 2002. 165.

Economic

Southeast Asia's economic infrastructure is broken and will remain so unless aggressive counterterrorism strategies focus on its long-term repair. Economic decay is particularly evident in the southern Philippines and sparsely populated islands of Indonesian and Malaysia. For the Global War on Terrorism to succeed, this infrastructure must be built to withstand a continuous onslaught from Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah guerillas. U.S. economic elements of national power can help revitalize regional economies. For this reason, the U.S. counterterrorism strategy in Southeast Asia must lead with economic reform.

Southeast Asia is home to a large portion of the world's Muslim population. Indeed, every country within the region contains a Muslim population. The majority of the region's Muslims, from the 197 million living in Indonesia to the 5,600 inhabiting Laos, practice a moderate form of Islam. They staunchly condemn terrorist attacks, yet most of the focus of the war on terrorism is aimed at the smaller percentage of radicalized Muslims. More focus should be on helping the larger percentage of moderate Muslims; meeting their basic needs of food and shelter, ensuring economic opportunity and providing security from terrorist attacks. Before expending effort to strengthen government institutions, the people of Southeast Asia deserve the basic necessities of life: food, shelter, and security.

A regional strategy must include educational reform throughout Southeast Asia. A pervasive lack of schools force parents to send their children to madrassas, religious schools taught by instructors steeped in Saudi Wahhabi tenets. Wahhabism, "an extremely fundamentalist and exclusionary form of Islam that originated in eighteenth century Saudi Arabia," needs to be countered by alternative forms of moderate Islam.¹¹⁵ Jessica Stern believes, "In countries where

¹¹⁵ Desker, 172.

extremist religious schools promote terror, Washington should help develop alternative schools rather than attempt to persuade the legal government to shut down radical madrasah's."¹¹⁶

Every effort to eradicate terrorism in Southeast Asia demands a focused examination of potential economic impacts. Balikitan 02-1, the U.S.—AFP military exercise presented opportunities beyond military assistance. During the exercise, American forces began “rebuilding Basilan’s airfield for the Philippine military, while working on 11 other engineering projects that have injected around \$4 million into the local economy.”¹¹⁷ US troops have also conducted free health care clinics for Basilan’s citizens. On 28 June 2004, Admiral Fargo marked the opening of Fort Magsaysay runway in Palayan City. A by-product of Balikitan (Shoulder-to-Shoulder) exercises, the airstrip offers AFP soldiers greater mobility and presents commanders a wider range of military options when dealing with Abu Sayyaf. While noting the obvious military advantages of the Balikitan exercises, Admiral Fargo stated “This recurring event is important and allows our integrated military teams the opportunities to not only train to realistic and productive standards, but too, it gives us a chance to provide much needed infrastructure for the surrounding communities.”¹¹⁸

Financial

Thus far, financial success at thwarting transnational terrorism in Southeast Asia has proven extremely difficult to achieve. Regional nations like the Philippines operate using antiquated banking and regulatory systems totally inadequate in the current global environment. Progress is further complicated by the extremely low cost of terrorist activity; the bombing of the Australian embassy by Jemaah Islamiyah is believed to have cost a mere \$20,000.¹¹⁹ As

¹¹⁶ Stern, Jessica. “The Protean Enemy”, *Foreign Affairs*. July/August 2003. Vol 82, No. 4: 39.

¹¹⁷ Burgess, Mark. “*The U.S. Deployment in the Philippines: Expand the Mission*”. CDI Terrorism Project. 7 June 2002. Available from <http://cdi.org/terrorism/philippines-expansion-pr.cfm>.

¹¹⁸ Admiral Tom Fargo, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command address at Fort Magsaysay Runway Opening, 28 June 2004.

¹¹⁹ Australian Government White Paper, 55.

previously mentioned, external financing is extremely important to both Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah. More needs to be done to regulate the money these groups receive from outside sources.

A great step forward in the financial domain occurred in August 2003, when Malaysia hosted the first South East Asia Regional Center for Counter Terrorism (SEARCCT) training program in Kuala Lumpur. Developed to provide training and increase regional counterterrorism capabilities, SEARCCT combined the expertise of the Central Bank of Malaysia and the U.S. Financial Crimes Enforcement Network to host its first Basic Analysis and Suspicious Transaction Workshop. U.S. officials participated in SEARCCT 2004 and should continue this commitment to ensure regional governments have the financial expertise needed to combat terrorism.

The benefits of increased maritime controls will be felt immediately in the financial domain. Currently, a major source of funding for Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah comes in the form of halawa, hand-to-hand money exchanges. Difficult to control because of porous borders and lax border control, this source of funding will suffer from the effects of regional maritime reform.

Law Enforcement

Law enforcement represents another critical instrument of national power that deserves increased financial resources and robust training reforms. Particularly in Southeast Asia, the existence of effective law enforcement is invaluable. Regional law enforcement agencies are better poised to combat terrorism than are military or police units. Past abuses committed by armed forces and police, as previous discussed, often create high levels of distrust among local citizens that hamper effective counterterrorism campaigns. Additionally, law enforcement agencies operate most effectively in urban environments where Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf members conduct the majority of terrorist activities.

A regional U.S. strategy should more aggressively support ongoing efforts to enhance the region's law enforcement capabilities and interoperability. Since the advent of GWOT, Southeast Asian governments have instituted several law enforcement programs the U.S. can leverage. The joint Australian-Indonesian Jakarta Center for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC), established in February 2004, comes on the heels of outstanding law enforcement cooperation following JI's attack on Bali. The Center's key objective is to enhance the operational expertise of regional law enforcement agencies in dealing with transnational crime by strengthening regional cooperation and developing counterterrorism skills.¹²⁰ In Bangkok, the U.S.-Thailand joint International Law Enforcement Academy offers courses emphasizing the rule of law, and seeks to improve coordination between regional law enforcement agencies. These are examples of existing institutions designed to increase Southeast Asia's ability to counter transnational criminal and terrorist activities. Increased support for these institutions is an important component of a U.S. regional counterterrorism strategy.

As recently as November 2004, U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation agents held a seminar for twenty senior Filipino officers of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group aimed at improving the capabilities of Manila's police in regards to terrorism. The benefits of these training programs ripple throughout the region, as these trained Filipino Police in turn pass these experiences and skills to other regional police agencies.

Customs/Maritime

In October 2004, Philippine Assistant Secretary of Defense Honorable Alejandro P. Melchor III, speaking to representatives from Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and the United States, identified five Southeast Asia maritime security challenges as piracy, maritime terrorism, transnational criminal trafficking operations, refugees and illegal

¹²⁰ Australian Government White Paper, 90.

migration, and protecting energy routes. Hon. Melchor stated, “Maritime transnational threats are global in nature,” and added “protection of the maritime domain is growing in importance as world energy consumption is expected to increase 60 percent by 2020 and 93 percent of Asia’s oil will come from the Middle East by 2010. The role of the military in protecting energy routes, sea-lines of communication, and chokepoints will increase.”¹²¹

The Regional Maritime Security Initiative (RMSI) devised by Pacific Command is a major leap towards mitigating Southeast Asia’s maritime threats. The goal of RMSI is to “develop a partnership of willing regional nations with varying capabilities and capacities to identify, monitor, and intercept transnational maritime threats under existing international and domestic laws.”¹²² Critical to the success of RMSI is increased situational awareness between nations, agile and rapid decision making based upon regional standard operating procedures, enhanced maritime interdiction capabilities, regional coast guard presence, increased port security and interagency cooperation. RMSI stresses a level of regional cooperation not yet present among Southeast Asia’s nations. In order to become a viable method of denying maritime access to Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah, RMSI needs unfettered U.S. support and backing.

U.S. Customs is a source of national power not traditionally leveraged in the global community. In Southeast Asia, limited littoral security presents insurgents prime opportunities to quickly and safely transfer funds, material and personnel across national borders. Lax border controls invite transnational insurgents to participate in ongoing sectarian violence between Christians and Muslims in Ambon, Indonesia. Preventing Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah jihadis from entering these conflict-ridden areas should be a major part of any regional strategy.

¹²¹ Commander Robert Wohlschlegel, Lieutenant Colonel Curtis W. Turner and Dr. Kent Butts, covering 2004 Maritime Threats Workshop, Cebu, Republic of Philippines, 26-30 July 2004. Available from <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usacsl/index.asp>.

¹²² Admiral Thomas B. Fargo, Commander U.S. Pacific Command, address to Military Operations and Law Conference in Victoria, British Columbia on 3 May 2004. Available from <http://www.pacom.mil/speeches/sst2004/040503milops.shtml>.

As occurred in Afghanistan throughout the 1980s, access to ongoing military conflicts provides inexperienced guerillas the opportunity to receive invaluable, hands-on training.

Judicial

Successes in law enforcement must be met with equaled progress in the judicial systems of Southeast Asia. Current regional legislation is inadequate to curb terrorist activities.

Legislations must give law enforcement agents the authority to detain suspected insurgents for questioning and ongoing investigations. The importance of eliminating violence cannot be overstated. Yet many countries lack the legislative powers to detain suspected insurgents. These nations are by default forced into a reactive mode, arresting only those accused of actual terrorist activity.

Many Southeast Asian countries are making considerable strides in judicial reform. In 2003, Indonesia “adopted a comprehensive terrorism law defining various acts of terror and providing police and prosecutors with broader powers to combat terrorism—such as extended pretrial detention periods and the use of electronic evidence in court.”¹²³ Malaysia aggressively initiated judicial reform shortly after 9/11. Its parliament beefed up anti-money laundering legislation, increased penalties for terrorist acts and allowed for the prosecution of individuals providing material support to terrorist.¹²⁴ These and the judicial reforms instituted by other Southeast Asian countries should not only be encouraged, but also rewarded with economic aid. For those countries slow to embrace judicial restructuring, economic aid packages provide lucrative incentives to hasten reforms and should be included in a regional strategy.

¹²³ U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism: 2003*, released by the Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism on 29 April 2004.

¹²⁴ *Patterns of Global Terrorism: 2003*.

Militarily

United States military-to military cooperation with Southeast Asian countries is essential to the success of the Global War on Terrorism. Unfortunately the road to cooperation is rugged and the path frequently obscure. The nature of U.S. military assistance is complicated by the existence of corruptness found within many of the regions military organizations. More importantly, Jakarta, Manila and Kuala Lumpur “have rejected the U.S. administration’s offers of direct combat assistance to fight terrorist groups within their national borders.”¹²⁵ For those opportunities to conduct military training with willing participants, U.S. military officials should consider the political backlash these activities may have on other regional counterterrorism efforts. In all cases, the military role, as noted by Admiral Fargo, should be primarily in the form of training, assisting and providing intelligence. In a statement to AFP senior officers, Admiral Fargo commented, “This is your fight against those that threaten your citizens and their peace and stability. We are glad to help in ways the AFP finds useful.”¹²⁶ This is the approach the U.S. should maintain and extend to other regional nations interested in training with U.S. soldiers.

Bilateral and multilateral training exercises have proven an effective method to heighten counterterrorism capabilities throughout the region. The U.S. and the Philippines successfully intertwined recurring bilateral training with counterterrorism efforts against Abu Sayyaf on Basilan Island. Balikatan 2002-01 pitted Philippine soldiers, in conjunction with U.S. advisors and trainers, in direct combat with the Moro insurgent group. During Balikatan 2002-02, Philippine military forces received training in a variety of military specialties to include helicopter, amphibious and urban operations, artillery training, humanitarian relief and civil engineering. As explained in the Asian Defense Journal, “The aim of the US counter-terrorism training exercise is to help the Philippine armed forces develop the skills and maintain the

¹²⁵ Desker, 169.

¹²⁶ www.pacom.mil/articles/articles2004/040630phil1.shtml

determination to eradicate the Abu Sayyaf in the insurgency-wrecked south”¹²⁷ To enhance regional maritime capabilities, U.S. Naval and Coast Guard sailors recently teamed with the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei and Singapore in executing Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) 2004. An ongoing series of bilateral exercises, CARAT is designed to “enhance interoperability of the U.S. sea services and those of friends and allies throughout the region in a variety of mission areas of mutual benefit.”¹²⁸ These exercises are excellent ways to encourage regional military cooperation and enhance counterterrorism capabilities. Bilateral and multilateral exercises empower Southeast Asian countries to fight global terrorism without threatening national sovereignty, a major concern for Malaysia and Indonesia.

In a 2002 issue of *Current History*, Joshua Kurlantzick issues a relevant warning regarding U.S. efforts to assist Southeast Asian militaries. Kurlantzick warns “Backing Southeast Asia’s often brutal and compromised militaries, which themselves contain elements linked to Islamist radicals will only boost human rights abuses, breeding popular resentment and setting the stage for more terror.”¹²⁹ It is imperative U.S. officials heed his admonition as they revise and update the nation’s regional strategy. As previously mentioned, AFP soldiers received close scrutiny in 2002 on reports of collusion with Abu Sayyaf guerillas during the siege of Lamitan. Kurlantzick reports, “Journalist in Lamitan heard the army warning Abu Sayyaf by radio that they were planning to attack, and saw the military wait until Abu members had evacuated a building before ‘capturing’ it.”¹³⁰ The Indonesian Army (TNI) received world-wide criticism for its handling of East Timor’s bid for independence and in Malaysia, former president Mahathir is

¹²⁷ Asian Defense Journal, January/February 2002. “Deployment of US Special Forces in the Philippines a Return to Déjà vu?”

¹²⁸ Virtual Information Center, “Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT)”, 2004. Available from <http://www.vic-info.org/RegionsTop.nsf/0/c3a9e3666476ef550a256eb3006fdd4f?Open>.

¹²⁹ Kurlantzick, Joshua. “Tilting at Dominos: America and Al Qaeda in Southeast Asia”, *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs*, December 2002: 421.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 424.

accused of using its Internal Security Act to arrest and detain members of the opposition Party Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS). U.S. military-to-military assistance and training is necessary to empower Southeast Asian governments to eradicate transnational terrorism. Assistance, however, must be carefully administered and monitored to ensure its appropriate usage.

CONCLUSION

Southeast Asia is the second front in the Global War on Terrorism. Immature democratic governments, ineffective maritime controls, poor border securities and a large Islamic population combine to make this region particularly susceptible to transnational terrorism. Home to a host of violent non-state actors like Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf, Southeast Asia is embroiled in a battle to eradicate these threats and exploit its strategic position in today's global market. Combined efforts of the region's nations have thus far scored limited success. Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf are crippled, but not broken. They continue to spread terror and threaten the existence and viability of the entire area. Their adaptive nature frustrates efforts to eradicate transnational terrorism.

Following the 9/11 terror attacks on America's homeland, President Bush committed the nation to a global war against terrorism, an effort to protect not only the United States, but its citizens, allies and interest throughout the world. Today, the United States is heavily engaged in Southeast Asia. Its strategic direction has achieved some success, but must receive continual updates to match the ever-evolving nature of the region's insurgencies. Recent terrorist attacks by Abu Sayyaf, and collusion between them and Jemaah Islamiyah highlight the supporting role of military assistance to the more permanent effects provided by political and economic reforms. To defeat Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah, the United States must use its full compliment of instruments of national power in a prioritized fashion. Collectively, these enablers assist Southeast Asian governments develop and execute effective counterterrorism strategies.

Identifying the aims of Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf is the first step to establishing an effective U.S. regional counterterrorism policy. Accurately assessing each insurgency's adopted strategic focus and predominant forms of warfare lays the foundation for additional analysis. Examining the environment, level of popular support, the organization, dependence on external support and governmental responses to insurgencies provides a methodology for evaluating an insurgency's relative strengths and weaknesses. This monograph has used this framework to identify essential effects a regional strategy must encompass in order to remain relevant and effective against Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah.

Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah will continue to evolve and adapt. As a result, U.S. officials must continually revisit their analysis and reformulate regional strategies to match the adapting threat. In an article entitled "The Protean Enemy," Jessica Stern so aptly remarked, "Only by matching the radical innovation shown by professional terrorist and by showing a similar willingness to adapt and adopt new methods and new ways of thinking can the United States and its allies make themselves safe from the ongoing threat of terrorist attacks."¹³¹

¹³¹ Stern, Jessica. "The Protean Enemy", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol 82, No. 4, July/August 2003: 40.

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